



SALUTE TO  
INDIA



# SALUTE TO INDIA

by

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Secretary of the National Christian  
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and Ceylon*

S. C. M. PRESS LTD.  
56 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1

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WORLD BOOK CENTRE  
B 516 Rana Partap Singh  
Delhi 7

*first published November 1944*

*Distributed in Canada by our exclusive agents  
The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited  
70 Bond Street, Toronto*

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY  
NORTHUMBERLAND PRESS LIMITED  
GATESHEAD ON TYNE -

# CONTENTS

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<i>FOREWORD</i>	6
I. IN INDIA NOW	7
II. "SWARAJ IS MY BIRTHRIGHT"	21
III. "THE BEST HOPE OF RURAL INDIA"	37
IV. "A STRANGE MAN"—MAHATMA GANDHI	49
V. WOMEN AND THE NATIONAL AWAKENING	61
VI. THE CHURCH IN INDIA	69
VII. THE MISSIONARY AND HIS FUTURE IN THE INDIAN SCENE	85
VIII. THE MINISTRY OF CHRISTIAN MEDICINE	102
IX. INDIA AND OURSELVES	117
<i>A SHORT BIBLIOGRAPHY</i>	126

## FOREWORD

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THIS does not profess to be an exhaustive study of the Indian situation. It is primarily a tribute to the Indian people, whom I know and respect, and a plea to my own people to approach the Indian problem with understanding, forbearance and trust. I believe they are worthy for whom this plea is made.

Since these pages were written Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah have met, which in itself is a good omen, and although the outcome of their conversations is still uncertain, we have reason to believe that they will pave the way for more official negotiations. It may be the march of events will render much of what is here written out of date, in which case no one will be more pleased than the writer.

In writing the more missionary chapters my memory has been refreshed by turning over the pages of *The National Christian Council Review*, *The Indian Witness* and *World Dominion*: if readers of these magazines light on matter they have read before they will see that it has been given a new and ampler version.

This study could not have been completed had it not been for the helpful co-operation and encouragement so readily given by Dr. Hugh Martin and his colleagues. To them also I offer a respectful and grateful salute.

J. Z. H.

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IN INDIA NOW

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THERE is something in this ancient land that grips the heart-strings of all who live, even for a short space, within its friendly frontiers. We who have been there recall the delights of Kashmir, the grandeur of the Himalayas, the spell of the Taj Mahal in Agra—no more beautiful building has ever been fashioned by human hands—and the romance of “old, unhappy far-off things and battles long ago”; but it is always to the kindly people that our hearts turn with respect and affection. To-day new life is pulsating everywhere in India. The political sky is overcast; but a great hope is throbbing in Indian hearts that soon now the auspicious day for which patriots pray and strive will break, and India look the whole world in the face free and unashamed.

It was wise and great-hearted Abraham Lincoln who said, “The Almighty must have a great regard for the common people, otherwise he would not have made so many of them.” To the friendly onlooker the outstanding fact in the Indian scene is the amazing number and vitality of the common people. The latest census figures give the total population as 388,998,000. In the last decade India added fifty million souls to its already congested human aggregate, thereby throwing into striking relief the biggest economic and social problem of the future. How to provide for the increasing human pressure on the soil is a task that will tax the resources of highest statesmanship. This is the amazing thing: in spite of war, famine, pestilence of many kinds, and ever present poverty, the people of India, with five thousand years of history behind them, live on and move forward to an ever expanding destiny. Judged from the standpoint of human values, and in the last analysis there can be no higher standard, India must take precedence among the



provinces that make up the widely diversified British Empire. Having spent close on forty-three years in this kindly land, mainly among village folk, and having received unvarying courtesy and kindness during that long working day, I should be ungrateful indeed if I did not acknowledge my debt and offer my salute of admiration and affection.

As all the world knows, India is a continent rather than a country, a land of far distances and many climates. Its breadth is equal to its length, and that is two thousand miles, while its coast-line runs to four thousand miles. Across its vast spaces stretches a network of railways of varying speeds and varying degrees of comfort; there are some great highways—who has not heard of the Grand Trunk Road stretching from Calcutta to the Khyber Pass—and innumerable humbler roadways, beset with dust, or mud, as the season serves, along which ply the motor-car, the motor-bus, the ubiquitous bicycle, the bullock-cart and the pilgrim who plods his weary way on foot towards the shrine of his desires. Nowadays, the aeroplane makes free use of the Indian sky, and in its own expensive way helps to bring widely scattered citizens nearer each other. Its size notwithstanding, and its racial and religious cleavages deep and wide, India responds bravely to the ideal of “unity in diversity”.

#### A LAND OF INFINITE VARIETY

India is a land of many races, the origins of which are still to a large extent obscure. The length of the Indian nose and the breadth of the Indian skull are still engaging the attention of the ardent anthropologist. The dominant races are the Hindus, who come of Aryan stock, and the Moslems, whose forebears were Tartars, Persians, Turks and Afghans. Hindus and Moslems in successive waves have swept down from Central Asia and settled themselves on the plains. In so doing they ran into but did not liquidate earlier settlers of Dravidian stock, dark in colour, short in stature, but lacking neither in culture nor in courage. Allied to the Dravidians are races of Mongol and Scythian blood, and if we trek to the North West Frontier

we are likely to meet tribes of a decided Semitic complexion.

A land of many races and many colours, India is a land of many languages. Classifications vary; but we may take it that there are roughly a hundred and fifty to two hundred in everyday use, which is enough for any people to get on with. Attempts have been made, and are still being made, to reach agreement on a common language for all India; but cultural traditions are strong, and the acceptance of a common script is proving a difficult hurdle. What is known as Hindustani, a mixture of Hindi, derived directly from the Sanskrit, and Urdu, which is a mixture of Hindi, Arabic and Persian, is widely spoken; and as an all-India language its only serious rival would seem to be English. It is the distinction of English that it is to a large extent the political language of India and lends itself to trenchant criticism of British policy. But the great languages of India will not readily die, and as the country resolves itself into the United States of India they will continue to thrive.

Thinking of language and the great hazard of the franchise we are confronted by the pathetically low standard of literacy, by which would be understood the ability to write a letter and read the reply. There is to-day a vigorous crusade on foot against illiteracy, and new methods are being employed that make it possible for an adult to achieve literacy of an elementary kind in the short space of three months. The standard, under the combined efforts of Government, local authorities, missionaries and other non-official agencies, is rising; but the fact that only 150 per 1,000 of the population are literate in the sense referred to is disturbing. Literacy and political intelligence are not necessarily synonymous; but most people will agree that the success of democratic ideals of government—to which I think India is definitely committed—is largely dependent on a well-ordered and widely diffused system of education. In no realm then is this incoming of new life so welcome as in the rich and rewarding province of education. No part of the Government of India's plans for post-war reconstruction will arouse more enthusiasm than the sections which deal with education in all its branches, and particularly with Adult Education. In this connection the objective is to make the adults,

estimated at ninety million, literate in the first instance, and to prevent them relapsing into illiteracy. To give effect to the proposed plan for Adult Education alone will involve an annual cost of roughly £2,250,000. But who shall say that the cost is not justified? For further particulars of this proposed educational advance—one of the biggest ever planned—readers are referred to the masterly memorandum prepared by Mr. John Sargent, Educational Adviser to the Government of India.<sup>1</sup> But let us not forget that, depressing as are the figures for literacy, India has a noble tradition of scholarship which she worthily maintains. In all branches of learning, and notably in religion, philosophy and law, her scholars excel. Were I asked to name six outstanding constitutional lawyers who might be given the responsibility of framing the constitution of the new League of Nations, I would not go beyond India to find the first three. Needless to say, I share India's reverence for the High Court. It is an old story; but it will bear retelling. In the long ago when the Russian scare was abroad an anxious tourist asked a provincial lawyer, "What would you do if Russia invaded India?" and received the decisive answer, "I would appeal to the High Court." India believes in the might and majesty of Law, and finds in the High Court a bulwark of liberty.

While we naturally think of the national movement in a political sense, we must not forget that it is permeating every province of Indian life, engendering revival and stimulating advance. It was my privilege to see something of the work of Uday Shankar, whose reputation as an exponent of Indian dancing is world wide. He is bringing back the grace of Indian dancing and Indian music, and reviving the rhythm of life once so characteristic of the Indian people. That is a very attractive expression of nationalism. Another chapter tells how the national movement is affecting the women of India, calling them forth to diverse forms of service and giving them a new standing ground of opportunity and respect. I must, however, mention here one important realm where the new spirit is

<sup>1</sup> *Post-war Educational Development in India*. Report by Central Advisory Board of Education. India Office. 1s.

markedly in evidence, and that is the industrial realm. India is definitely heading towards industrial self-sufficiency. Already she ranks eighth among the industrial countries of the world, and her iron and steel works at Tatanagar, in the Province of Bihar, which owe their existence to the vision and initiative of the well-known Parsee family of Tata, are only excelled by those of Pittsburg in the United States. The cry is now—on to the mill and factory rather than back to the spinning-wheel and hand-loom. India has discovered that she cannot live by agriculture alone and she is turning her hands to the furnace and the forge. A thrilling story could be told of India's war effort in which not only her volunteer army of two million and more first-class fighting men play a noble part, but her manufacture of munitions also excites our wonder and pride. To Western readers who fear lest this rapid march of industrialization may mean exploitation of the workers, I pass on this word of comfort, that India has already two hundred and fifty Trade Unions and a Labour Party definitely feeling its way.

Many religions thrive in India, for it is a hospitable land and the things of the spirit engage the common mind to an extent unknown in other countries. From the latest census records it would appear that the Hindus, with whom are included the scheduled castes,<sup>1</sup> number approximately 280,000,000; Moslems, who come next in numerical order, 94,389,000; Christians, still far down the ladder but steadily mounting, 7,500,000; Sikhs, another virile and rapidly increasing community, 5,691,000; while smaller denominations such as Jains, Parsees and Jews bring up the rear. India is the birthplace of Buddhism; but to-day barely a million Buddhists are to be found within its bounds, a striking tribute to the genius for absorption inherent in the Hindu religion. Exiled from the land of its birth Buddhism thrives in Burma and Ceylon, leaving, however, some of its distinctive teaching embedded in the thought and faith of the Hindu.

<sup>1</sup> The name now given to the "depressed classes" or "outcastes".

## CLEAVAGES IN THE BODY POLITIC

The religious divisions of India have been placarded abroad; but a brief reference will be in order. What we have to remember is that these differences are as theological as they are political and social. Hindus and Moslems, who constitute the vast proportion of the population, worship at separate altars; they follow separate ways of life; they boast of separate civilizations; both look back on a splendid past, and both look forward to a splendid future. The ideal of Pakistan—literally the “holy land”—has captured the imagination of the Moslem and he dreams of a Sovereign Moslem State, or even more than one, independent and autonomous, in which unhampered he can follow the way of life he has inherited from his fathers. To make this dream come true will involve the division of India into two or more independent states, or, at any rate, the redistribution of the existing Indian Provinces in such a way as to secure the substance of the Moslem demand. On the other hand, the orthodox Hindu thinks in terms of a united India, many states but all linked up in one union with a strong government at the centre. Unhappily, the dark shadow of suspicion lies across this fundamental issue and makes agreement a hard problem. In Pakistan, the Hindu sees the rise of a Moslem Empire, stretching far beyond the frontiers of India and linking up with neighbouring Moslem lands, a return to the splendours and dominance of Moghul imperialism. In the new India, envisaged by the Hindu dreamer, the Moslem sees a predominantly Hindu kingdom, committed to the maintenance and dominion of the Hindu religion. Both fear that unless a right understanding is arrived at before the British Government hands over the keys of office a stormy period of internal strife is likely to ensue. That fear is, unfortunately, well grounded. Often in the long eventful history of India have communal passions burst into acts of violence that have startled and saddened the law-abiding citizen. The violent clash between Hindu and Moslem, and even between sections in the same community, has been, alas, a too frequent occurrence.

Against this widely diffused fear of coming strife I advance three steadfast convictions. (1) I have seen Hindu and Moslem living together as friends and neighbours, sharing common joys and common sorrows and even the exhilaration of each other's festivals. That, I think, is the normal attitude rather than communal antagonism. (2) There are men and women of good sense and goodwill in all the religious communities whose patriotism is beyond reproach and whose ability to handle affairs of state is unquestionable. They can be trusted to lead their people aright. (3) India's growing contact with the outer world is another omen of good hope. These last few years have brought China and Russia nearer the life of India, and India's fighting men will soon be returning from far fields of battle. They have fought a good fight and have held their own in the best of company. They will return with a new insight into world affairs and a quickened desire to see their country united and strong at home, and respected abroad. That same outer world has wit enough to see that India, by virtue of its age-long emphasis on the things of the spirit, has its own contribution to make towards the well-being of the nations.

There are those of India's leaders who feel that the presence of a third party, even though it be a benevolent third party, is an embarrassing factor in the situation and a hindrance to communal unity. I think there is something in that and therefore in the suggestion that the paramount power should fix a time limit and declare that at the end of, say, three years it will relinquish control, if in the meantime agreement has not been reached, and leave India to work out its own destiny. It hardly lies within the province of the British Government to create and replenish communal unity, nor do I think it is called to stand perpetually on guard to keep the peace in India. Chaos and civil war could only come in the event of a complete breakdown of Indian good sense. The problem is certainly a hard one and no final solution lies to hand; but these reflections may indicate a way out. (1) Where religious issues arise, as they do in India, anything like complete unity cannot be expected; but understanding, mutual respect and an agreement to differ can be arrived at. (2) The dominating consideration both in

communal and non-communal circles—and it holds with the Indian States, the Scheduled Castes, Christians, Sikhs, Anglo-Indians and Parsees as well as Hindus and Moslems—is, what guarantee can we have that in the independent India that is coming our particular interests will be safeguarded? In India, as in the world generally, “Security” is the cry! The answer to that is twofold. In the new constitution, that has yet to be drawn up by a body representative of all recognized parties and interests, the safeguards demanded will assuredly be written in, and here, the appeal to the High Court, so rightly prized in India, will be a sheet anchor of confidence. But the real answer lies in the good sense of the people, an enlightened public opinion. That, after all, is the highest sanction. If mutual trust and unity cannot be imposed from without, nor fashioned overnight from within, an honourable understanding and working agreement should not be beyond the wit of British and Indian statesmen. (3) It is well to remember that the principle of religious neutrality on the part of the State is well established.

#### THE FLOWING TIDE

Looking at the rising tide of Nationalism that is sweeping through every province of Indian life, we naturally ask whence it comes and whither it goes. Its inspiration lies in the awakened instinct of a great and proud people who are claiming their birthright of self-government, and it derives strength from the emergence of great and powerful personalities; India has rediscovered herself. I am glad to think, and I believe the general mind of India is ready to recognize, that in the development of the national life of the country the British connection has been a powerful and providential factor. That mistakes have been made goes without saying; but these, I think, have been due to lack of imagination, individual incompetence and an excessive respect for caution rather than lack of sympathy, goodwill and sincerity of motive. Steeped in the spirit, and trained in the practice, of democracy Great Britain has carried across the seas to India the ideals and forms of parliamentary government that have meant so much to herself, and it is no

small tribute to her precepts and example that democratic institutions have struck deep in the receptive soil of India. India shares our British admiration for the House of Commons. I know opinions differ as to the fitness of the democratic system of government for a land largely illiterate, in which caste and custom hold sway, and power tends to reside in the hands of the few and the privileged; but the iron grip of these two mighty social and religious controls is weakening and the common man is coming to think and act for himself. However much Nazism and Fascism may appeal to certain minds, I am quite sure they do not appeal to the general mind of India which is set on freedom, equality and fraternity.

The British Government have strictly maintained the principle of religious neutrality, and there is every reason to believe that that golden rule will be observed when Whitehall is transferred to Delhi. I need not stay to praise the Indian Civil Service whose standards of ability and integrity in the public service are universally recognized; but I should like to put in a word for the British men and women who have served India well in medicine, engineering (civil and mechanical), in the army, in trade and commerce, in education and, not least, on the playing-field. India's railways, irrigation systems—as extensive as the world can show anywhere—business houses, mills and factories, schools and colleges are eloquent testimony to the service rendered by men and women from Great Britain who preferred to work and blush unseen rather than “blow their own bagpipes”, as a student in a Scottish missionary college once put it. Among the rich baggage we will leave behind in India will certainly be a football and a cricket bat. India is not likely to forget the debt she owes to English literature. Her statesmen, scholars, politicians and liberal-minded citizens have drunk deep from this life-giving spring. Among the British things that will abide in India will be the English language. But there is no reason why all these services that have meant so much to the development of national life in India should be discontinued when India is free and independent. The only difference will be that the writ will run from Delhi and not from Whitehall. British brains and British



money will always be welcome in India if they come along the grand trunk road of partnership and equality. For my part, I cherish the steadfast belief that the present heavy clouds of suspicion and distrust will soon lift, and I hail the coming of a relationship between India and my own country closer, freer and richer than we have yet known. To this end, I pray that immediate steps be taken to bring the party leaders, whether interned or not, into unrestricted conference to resume negotiations where Sir Stafford Cripps was unfortunately compelled to leave them.

#### IS AGREEMENT POSSIBLE?

Who are these party leaders? If they come together will they agree? These questions meet one at every turn, and while they invite the obvious retort that whoever these party leaders are, and whether they agree or not, are Indian concerns, they deserve an answer. All the world knows Mr. Gandhi, or, at any rate, thinks it knows him: he is an old man now, having long passed the allotted human span, and is unlikely to head any further crusades. He has definitely secured for India an assured place on the political map of the world, and I think he may be trusted to leave to those of his colleagues as are skilled in state-craft the final adjustments as they affect conflicting internal Indian interests and the wider interests of international relations. Able lieutenants are within call who will speak for the Indian National Congress, the premier and most powerful political party. Founded in 1885, with the blessing of the British Government, it has grown in stature and influence, until to-day it has a cell of interest in practically every village in British India, and no little hold in the Native States. Its membership is open to all communities, religious or otherwise; but at the present time the Hindus are the "predominant partner". It stands for complete independence and is committed to non-violence as a principle of political action. Within its ranks are men of proved patriotism and political sagacity who would lend distinction to any council hall. Of these, mention might be made of three. In the

first place, there is the President, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, a distinguished Moslem scholar and publicist, who could be counted on to see beyond the purely communal issue. Next to him would be Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, a former Congress President, bearer of an honoured name and himself a popular leader. He is acclaimed as the champion of the masses and the hope of young India. Born in 1893, educated at Harrow and Cambridge, the friend of China and Russia, he is the obvious successor to Mr. Gandhi. Our third choice would be Babu Rajendra Prasad, also a former Congress President. He knows the peasant, as few know him, is held in the highest regard by all classes, including Europeans, in the Province of Bihar, and his political probity is beyond question.

Leaving the National Congress we come to the Moslem League, whose President and unchallenged leader is Moulana Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Founded in 1906, the League is a communal organization and only Muhammadans are admitted to its membership. It ranks next in importance to the Congress, and during recent years it has strengthened its position greatly. It stands for a double measure of independence, independence for a Moslem State within an independent India. Oddly enough, Mr. Jinnah was at one time President of the National Congress, but his relations with that body are now none too cordial, and therein lies one obstinate bar to national unity. That bar, however, need not be regarded as insuperable. Mr. Jinnah is a man of affairs as well as a man of the cloister, and, provided the demand for Pakistan is guaranteed a fair hearing, he is statesman enough to come to terms. Obviously, it is to the interest of his community to reach an understanding with the Hindus and other parties. Happily, Mr. Jinnah has many able colleagues who will work with him for a settlement. May not the solution to Pakistan lie in increased provincial autonomy?

Numerically, the next largest party would be the princes and the populations which are under their care. It does not follow that the interests of the princes and their subjects are the same, but for the purpose of reaching ultimate agreement it is necessary that they both be heard. It is not always

realized in the West that nearly 40 per cent of India is included in the Native States, and that ninety million of India's population are domiciled there. The States themselves number 562, some very large and some very small. They have treaties or other understandings with the British Crown that make them independent of the Government of India, except in so far as they come under the paternal care of the Viceroy. The princes have not shown any enthusiasm for federation, thinking probably that thereby their sovereign rights might be impaired; but they have shown a readiness to come into conference and talk things over. Some of them have proved to be great patriots, and in cultivating the arts and music, in fostering sportsmanship and providing fighting men for the army they have rendered their country very real service. They are a loosely assorted group, rather than a compact party, but among them are leaders and statesmen who know something of the outer world as well as the internal affairs of India. Obviously, when the party leaders come together the Native States must be represented.

Corresponding to the Moslem League is the Mahasabha, or "Great Council", of the Hindus. It represents orthodox Hinduism and is frankly communal. Standing as it does for an India, one and indivisible, and, incidentally, for the democratic principle of rule by the majority, it is stoutly opposed to the Moslem demand for Pakistan. There are indications, however, that it is not so irrevocably united as to rule out the possibility of compromise, and some of its leaders have shown themselves ready to negotiate with their Moslem brethren. Like the Congress and League they have able spokesmen at their call.

The scheduled castes must now be regarded as an organized party whose voice will be heard when the leaders confer. In the person of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar they have a leader of outstanding quality. He has won his way by sheer merit to a position of power, and it is no mere accident that he is now Minister for Labour in the Viceroy's Council. How far the influence of the Congress still holds with the scheduled castes is difficult to say: it would appear, however, that Dr. Ambedkar

is now their acknowledged champion. He claims to speak for fifty million of the "poor whom men's eyes forget", and he will stoutly maintain their right. That should help to reassure those who fear the interests of the "teeming millions" will be overlooked.

What we have been dealing with would be regarded as major parties; but let us bear in mind that there is an influential residue of men and women of goodwill, distributed throughout all the Provinces, who hold aloof from these parties; in fact they prefer to be known as non-party politicians. They are mostly of the Liberal school of politics, but well disposed to the National Congress in its mildest form. Unhappily for the good estate of the country they are not well organized, and when they speak they are met with the gibe that they have no following; but for good political sense and high ideals of citizenship their match would be hard to find. I mention three of them who, if given a free hand, could draft the coming constitution to general satisfaction. Mr. Rajagopalachari, a former and eminently successful Premier of Madras, and until recently an influential member of the Congress Working Committee, is a man with a distinguished record of public service. Still in his sixties, a Brahman of the Brahmins, an intellectual of the intellectuals, a leader by tradition and natural ability, he would be the first choice for Premier in the coming independent All-India Parliament. Sir Tez Bahadur Sapru is another citizen of the same quality. A member of His Majesty's Privy Council, lawyer, scholar, statesman, he ought to be in the House of Lords, for he is the ideal "elder statesman". Then there is Raja Sir Maharaj Singh, President of the Liberal Federation and leader of the Indian Christian community: he has behind him a long and notable career of public service. He is neither a communalist nor an extremist; and, by virtue of his standing in the Christian community, he is well qualified to exercise a reconciling ministry. A way, too, would be found whereby what are commonly called the minorities—Christians, Sikhs, Parsees, Anglo-Indians and Europeans—would have representation; for when the leaders come to confer on such high matters as the present and future

governance of India it is right and proper that all interests should be represented.

How to get the leaders together is the question. Personally, I think the next move lies with the British Government. We must begin where Sir Stafford Cripps ended : that, rather than the unfortunate Resolution of August 1942, should be the starting-point.<sup>1</sup> If it be asked, "What is the use, the Indian leaders will never agree," I urge these considerations. The cleavages between the various parties are deep and wide and it would be stupid to ignore them; but there is one steady factor in the situation : with all the parties represented it should not be possible for any one party to impose its will on the others. Since Sir Stafford Cripps came and went the economic problem has loomed up large; the question of the country's food can no longer be left unanswered; great schemes of reconstruction, economic and educational, to come into effect after the war, are forcing themselves to the fore, and demanding the attention of the best brains of all the parties : these things are an imperative call to the Government and the parties to get together and tackle the political issue again. The Indian problem has now an international significance, and if the leaders fail to reach agreement, instead of winning the approbation of the observant outside world they will earn its pity. There remains my strongest ground of hope : I have confidence in the good sense of the Indian people. If their leaders fail them they will not hesitate to change them. But I do not think the leaders will fail.

The impatient Western critic will ask, why don't they get together? Self-respect is the Indian answer. The popular leaders are in jail and the terms on which they can get release are incompatible with their sense of self-respect. On the other hand, conscious that they did the right thing in interning these leaders, the Government are reluctant to do anything that might give the impression that possibly they had made a mistake. A clean slate, a fresh start, a generous gesture from Whitehall : granted these, a new and glorious page in the history of India will open.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 34.

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"SWARAJ IS MY BIRTHRIGHT"

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ON the choupatty sands of Bombay, and within bowshot of Wilson College, that splendid missionary outreach of the Church of Scotland, stands the gigantic statue of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the distinguished Indian leader of a past generation, whose memory it enshrines. Inscribed in large Marathi characters, for the thousands who throng this popular rallying ground to read, mark and inwardly digest, are the arresting words, "SWARAJ IS MY BIRTHRIGHT". That was the creed of a great patriot; it is the creed of an increasing number of his countrymen to-day. India is discovering herself and claiming her place in the family of nations. Our birthright is self-government: therein lies the inspiration and sanction of the present movement for independence that is gathering strength with every wind that blows.

Standing by the statue of Tilak and marking the impression it made on the crowds that gathered at its base, I recalled an occasion in late August 1942 when I heard, for the first time in forty-two years, the significant cry "Quit India". It may have been but a wandering voice on a passing wind of political hysteria, for, following the arrest of prominent Congress leaders, excitement was running high at the time; or it may have been a portent, an instance of "coming events casting their shadows before". To me, it was a portent—the creed of Bal Gangadhar Tilak on the wing. I knew full well that the slogan was aimed primarily at the stately fabric of the paramount power in whom control inheres; but I knew also that to the man in the Indian street I represented in some obscure way that same system of control. The significance of the slogan could not be misunderstood: India was claiming her birthright. There are many conflicting cries in the Indian sky to-day, but this cry—the cry of the patriot in every land—

"Give us our birthright, and give it now", dominates all others. The demand is made not for a favour, nor is it advanced as a *quid pro quo* for a national war effort: it is a claim to an inherent and inalienable right. Its assertion, made on an ever-widening front, is the outstanding feature of the Indian scene to-day. No longer the creed of a party, it is the creed of a people. The general mind of this ancient and awakened people is set on independence, either within or without the British Commonwealth of Nations, and will not be satisfied till that great goal is won. Whether or not India will live happily ever afterwards is a question only she and time can determine.

The demand for independence, now expressed in terms of "Purna Swaraj"—full self-government—need neither surprise nor disquiet us. It springs spontaneously from a natural instinct and follows naturally the trend of British policy since 1833. In his masterly Report on the Constitutional Problem in India—a Report all who wish India well should study—Professor Coupland begins Chapter II of Part I<sup>1</sup> with these words: "Englishmen who thought about India never seem to have supposed that its subjection to British rule, however long it might last, was a permanent dispensation." Among the prophets of India's emancipation, from whom he quotes, he mentions Henry Lawrence as saying in 1844, "We cannot expect to hold India for ever. Let us so conduct ourselves . . . as, when the connection ceases, it may do so not with convulsions but with mutual esteem and affection, and that England may then have in India a noble ally, enlightened and brought into the scale of the nations under her guidance and fostering care." A noble ally: that is surely an alliance to be maintained at all hazards. Judged by human values, India with a population approaching three hundred and ninety million outweighs all other provinces of the Empire in importance.

We cross the intervening years, and come to August 20, 1917, and hear Mr. E. S. Montagu, the then Secretary of State for India, speaking in the House of Commons and making this historic declaration of British policy in India: "The policy of

<sup>1</sup> *The Indian Problem 1833-1935*, Oxford University Press, p. 18.

His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire."<sup>1</sup> Obviously what was intended was the development of self-governing institutions after the British fashion: in other words, of parliamentary government. I think it can be rightfully maintained that with all its cautions and hesitations the policy of the British Government in India has kept close to the spirit of that declaration. The impression, however, persists in India that while we recognize the right to self-government we are doubtful about the capacity of the Indian people, divided as they are by political, religious, racial, geographical and social differences, and held down by the inhibitions of poverty, illiteracy and exacting customs, to make the best use of this sovereign right. "Independence, but hardly yet: we must be the judge of the fitting time" would not unfairly describe the British response to the "Quit India" challenge. It was a discerning and democratic British statesman who affirmed that "Good government is no substitute for self-government", and when he said that he struck a responsive chord in politically minded India. But may it not be that we too readily conclude that India is not yet ripe for responsible government? In any case, are we the best judges? Have not the people of India shown in no uncertain manner that, given the opportunity, they can hold their own in the best of company? Not only have her soldiers on the blood-stained sands of the African desert proved themselves "second to none" in bravery and endurance, but also in the peaceful pursuits of law, commerce, education and industry and the manifold affairs of state her citizens have played their part and played it well. Doubtless I shall be confronted with the depressing record of municipal achievement; but municipalities in every land are prone to err and seldom escape criticism. They are very human institutions and endowed with an extra measure of original sin.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.



Let me remind those who foresee chaos when Britain hands over control, that "new occasions teach new duties", and from the following incident we may assuredly gather that, given the occasion, India will rise to it. Following the arrest of the Congress leaders in August 1942 there was an outbreak of mob violence on a wide front, accompanied by acts of sabotage. The important railway junction of Kiul on the East India Railway was attacked by an excited mob, who did their best to set it on fire. It happened that an ammunition train was standing in that station and in imminent danger. At the risk of his life the Bengali Brahman station-master—a citizen not given to warlike deeds—finding no other help available, boarded an engine, uncoupled the two wagons containing the ammunition, attached them to the engine and got them away to safety. This heroic action disclosed a high sense of responsibility, a fine initiative and a total disregard for his own safety. It won the distinction of the George Cross, a recognition that sent a thrill of pride through the land. With her great traditions it is not surprising that India resents the implication that she is not ready and able to shoulder the responsibility of self-government. That implication wounds her self-respect. Let us remember that with probably five thousand years behind her, India has shown her capacity for survival, and cease to flatter ourselves that we know better than the people of India themselves what is good for them.

The "Quit India" slogan brought the sombre and humbling reflection that we are not now so generally regarded as indispensable to the governance and well-being of India as we were, even a decade ago. The age of imperialism, with which British rule in India is fashionably associated in circles none too friendly to us, is gleefully said to be over. But let it be clearly understood that the objection is to British control and not British personnel: the white man, be he official, business man, or missionary, who comes to India, if content to take his place as an ordinary member of society until by popular choice he is called to "come up higher", need not fear deportation. He who "does justly, loves mercy and walks humbly with his God" will find a home and a calling in

India. The humble walk in particular will always command respect!

# OUR WORD IS DOUBTED

There is one disquieting fact in the situation: in many Indian circles our British word is no longer accepted as our bond. What Mr. Jinnah, the Moslem leader, in an acid moment, said of Mr. Gandhi, "You do not mean what you say, and you do not say what you mean", is said with equal acidity by many Indian leaders of British statesmen. There can be little doubt that this distrust of Britain's plighted word had a direct bearing on that failure of the mission so gallantly and hopefully undertaken by Sir Stafford Cripps. The cause of this growing distrust lies in a sense of frustration and the feeling among Indians that we do not trust them, rather than a dispassionate review of Britain's dealings with India. It is a comparatively new development, the outcome partly of a persistent anti-British propaganda on the part of those in India and abroad who look with unfriendly eyes on the far-flung British Empire and would gladly see it liquidated. Our habit of finding relief in excessive and didactic speech-making has also had something to do with it. In some measure, the fortuitous combination of circumstances has lent colour to the view that our declarations are pious platitudes, or covers to ulterior ends; and, it must be added, our seeming reluctance to give effect in practice to what we affirm in principle has not helped to lighten the encircling gloom. Whatever the cause, or causes, we mark with deep concern this doubt regarding our good faith infecting the Indian body politic. The visit of Sir Stafford Cripps was a sombre illustration. His arrival in India was hailed as an act of fine statesmanship; but it soon took on the sinister interpretation of a purely war measure, a sop to America, a gesture to Russia and China. An Indian friend said to me, "Your Sir Stafford was sent by the British Cabinet to appease the United States of America and not primarily to do justice to India." In my indignation, for I am not only a Scot but probably a Pict, I made reply that while the British Cabinet might lack

imagination, take pride in its superior wisdom and pay small heed to psychology, its honesty of purpose could not thus lightly be impugned. We may, as the paramount power, have too readily assumed that political sagacity was a British monopoly, and, without doubt, we have underestimated the strength of Indian sentiment as expressed in the birthright creed of Bal Gangadhar Tilak; but I do not think that the mission of Sir Stafford Cripps was other than an honest attempt to settle a very difficult problem. That it failed is past history now; but it was a noble failure, and from such failures, if we have grace to learn from them, true success ultimately springs.

The distrust that lies so heavy about our ways in India is doubtless a reflection of that greater distrust that envelopes the international scene and darkens our understanding. To the Indian charge, "You do not trust us", we must pay earnest heed and, as far as we can, prove that it is no longer tenable. There is good reason to believe that British honesty is not yet liquidated in India. To the peasant embroiled in a lawsuit, the word of a Briton carries confidence, and where business men of both countries forgather distrust has little standing ground. An illustration comes to mind. In Chapter III will be found the story of the rural co-operative centre at Gosaba in Bengal, founded by Sir Daniel Hamilton, some thirty-five years ago. He died in 1939, and in Gosaba the anniversary of his death is observed as a Day of Remembrance. It was my privilege to be present on one of these memorable days and to hear this tribute paid by a Bengali gentleman to an eminent Scot who was also a great friend of India, "Sir Daniel Hamilton always keeps his word." Not only did Sir Daniel keep his word, he trusted the word of the peasant of Bengal. With mutual respect restored, and I know no surer method of restoration than honest dealing, Great Britain and India will enter a new and enduring partnership.

But to return to 1917. The historic declaration made by the Secretary of State for India, in the name of the British Cabinet, was followed in 1919 by an Act of Parliament which gave a substantial measure of responsible government to India. Notably, it provided for the introduction of government by

Ministers responsible to an elected legislature in the Indian Provinces. In the meantime, the term Dominion Status had taken on a new and significant connotation by the acceptance of what is known as the Westminster Statute, which recognizes the right of a Dominion to secede. In the years that followed a serious endeavour was made to give effect to this policy, and high hopes were born; but adverse influences, determined to force the pace, came into play and the standard of revolt was raised. Another Richmond, in the magnetic person of Mahatma Gandhi, arrived in the field, and, largely under his inspiration, the National Congress accepted as its creed "Complete Independence, to be obtained by all peaceful and non-violent means". Claiming Swaraj as their birthright, and impatient at the delay in its coming, the Congress embarked on a policy of non-co-operation, doubtless thinking thus to force the hand of what they considered a reluctant paramount power. They argued that Great Britain would yield to pressure rather than to persuasion. All the while, the breach between Hindu and Moslem widened, and smaller communities, apprehensive about their future security, began to organize and agitate as they saw the day of independence beginning to dawn. There can, I think, be little doubt that the near approach of Swaraj has made Indian differences stand out in sharper relief; but that does not mean that they cannot be resolved.

#### THE SIMON COMMISSION

Another important landmark brings us to 1927, when the Statutory Commission under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon came into action. The Commission was an Act of Parliament and its composition confined to its-own members. That arrangement may have been strictly in keeping with parliamentary procedure; but the exclusion of Indians offended Indian sentiment and Sir John and his band of hope were welcomed with black flags in unexpected places and urged to "Go back, Simon!" However, they did their work and did it faithfully. Out of their Report—a truly historic document

—came in due course the India Act of 1935. Much discussion had to be gone through before the Act was fashioned and placed on the Statute Book. A memorable Round Table Conference was convened in London and attended by many great ones, British and Indians. The Conference held three sessions between 1930 and 1932. The Congress stood aloof from sessions one and three, but was notably represented at session two by Mahatma Gandhi as its sole delegate. The Conference disclosed deep and widening communal cleavages, necessitating an appeal to the Prime Minister, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, who promulgated the much debated Communal Award. But, at the same time, a substantial measure of agreement was reached which laid the foundation for the Act of 1935. Under the provisions of this Act the Provinces received a larger instalment of autonomy; a plan for the "Federation of India", to include the Native States as well as the Provinces, was adumbrated; greater freedom of action was given to the Centre, restrained, however, by a small assortment of embarrassing "safeguards", which to the ardent nationalist betokened distrust and drove him into opposition.

The Federation Scheme, that seemed to many so desirable and so reasonable, came in for attack from three influential quarters—the National Congress who rejected the Act as a whole because of its hesitant character and entered the new Legislatures, by popular election, with a view to ending it; by the Moslem League, who saw in the proposed new shape of things the certainty of Hindu predominance, and therefore a menace to the Moslem way of life; by the princes who feared a democratic invasion of their sovereign rights and stood out for still stronger safeguards. The rejection of federation was a sad disappointment to many besides the Viceroy; but we have this comfort that, come what may, the constitution makers must get back to federation in some form or another. However, the caravan moved on. Elections were held in the winter of 1936-7 and surprised a good many people by returning substantial Congress majorities in seven out of the eleven provinces concerned, thus revealing the strength of its hold on the electorate. The new governments got to work, and

although they were largely new to the business, they came through the test with credit. One unhappy situation developed; the rift between Congress and Moslem League widened, the latter protesting that the party in power had ridden roughshod over the rights of the minorities. While ground for a reasonable protest existed, I do not think it justified the clamour raised; but it raised an important issue. Speaking for his community, Mr. Jinnah declared that democracy based on the will of the majority would not work in India, a view that keeps on recurring in our Indian discussions. “What India needs is a benevolent dictatorship,” said a distinguished South Indian lawyer to me, and seemed surprised when I demurred. But the old question, “Is the parliamentary system of government as practised in Great Britain best suited to Indian ways and Indian conditions?” will inevitably arise when the constitution of an India free and independent is being fashioned. While my own lot would be cast for the affirmative, I have lived long enough in India not to attach finality to any political view. What is good for my own country may not be the best for India. Happily India is rich in lawyers and public men of distinction, men who know and can interpret the splendid story of their country’s past, men who know the mind and heart of their people, men who can rise above mere party considerations: these men, as I have already claimed, can draft a constitution that will surprise both Whitehall and Washington, and safeguard, as far as is humanly possible, the fundamental rights of minorities.<sup>1</sup>

The war led to the resignation of the Congress Governments in the Provinces of Bengal, Bihar, Bombay, Central Provinces, Madras, North West Frontier, Orissa and the United Provinces, and the withdrawal of the Congress members from the normal work of the Central Legislature, much to the regret of friend and foe. While technically the Viceroy could do no other than commit India to participation in the war, since the British Parliament was India’s overlord, there was widespread regret that the consent of the popular Assembly was not invited. That it would have been given I do not doubt: that it was

<sup>1</sup> See p. 10.

not invited wounded nationalist India in her self-respect and fanned the rising flame of bitterness. But, as all the world knows, India made a noble rally to the standard, and her contribution in men, women, money and material was noteworthy, and it revealed, beyond all cavil, where her sympathies lay. I am of those who think that, mighty as that contribution was, and is, a substantial measure of representative responsible government during these war years would have made it mightier yet.

#### THE MISSION OF SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

To come back to the mission of Sir Stafford Cripps. I have called it a noble failure, and such indeed it was. It must be remembered that Sir Stafford had to operate in an atmosphere of suspicion and uncertainty. He was long in coming; things were not going well with the Allies; Japan was nearing the gates of India, and many sober-minded citizens thought an invasion imminent; India's whole-hearted co-operation in the war effort was badly needed: it seemed therefore to suspicious and calculating minds that this brilliant servant of the Crown had come to strike a bargain, to say in effect, give us your whole-hearted support now and we will give you what you want when the war is won. India has a natural and well-developed taste for bargaining; and it is not surprising that her leaders put forward alternative proposals. They said, give us what we want now and we will give you all you want now and hereafter. Sir Stafford's precise declaration of complete self-government after the war was described by Mr. Gandhi as a "post-dated cheque", and undoubtedly among the Indian leaders there were those who doubted the certainty of an Allied victory and questioned alike the will and the ability of the British Government to make good its pledge and honour the handsome cheque tendered by its messenger. They, therefore, entered an alternative plea for complete self-government now, or, failing that, the setting up of a provisional government that could rightly be termed national and representative. This was too much for a perplexed

paramount power, beset with world problems and determined to look well before it made the final leap. Moreover, the demand for a national government involving the principle of Cabinet responsibility would necessitate a change in the Constitution, and this to Whitehall was too big a hazard to accept at this critical juncture in the fortunes of the war. Conflicting claims put forward by parties other than the Congress regarding their standing in the new order that was to come into being after the cessation of hostilities made the task of the ambassador all the more difficult; but I think it is clear that present demands rather than future promises were the rock on which his hopeful barque foundered.

It is the fashion to explain why Sir Stafford Cripps failed. I cannot do that; but in my simplicity I offer these comments. The time was not auspicious: he should have come at least a year earlier; he brought a plan made in London; he interviewed the leaders separately and never all together; he did not know his India well enough and he was in too big a hurry: had he stayed longer he would have fared better. Like Africa, India loves a long palaver. The importance of the mission can be measured by the widespread disappointment that followed its failure. With a small group of Bengalis in a rural settlement, far from the beaten track, I listened in to Sir Stafford's moving farewell broadcast, and seldom have I seen a group so deeply moved. "He deserved to succeed," they said: I think he will yet succeed; perhaps not in the exact terms of the scheme he expounded, but certainly in the essence and spirit of it.

Since much has been made of the "Quit India" slogan proclaimed by Mr. Gandhi, and later officially adopted by the National Congress, a brief reference is called for.

#### QUIT INDIA

It is impossible to give readers in Britain any adequate understanding of the confused and unhappy events that followed the failure of the Cripps mission. A feeling of frustration, almost amounting to despair, crept over the politically



mininded, and men and women friendly to the British connection gave themselves over to bitter reflection. Party leaders were soon busy apportioning blame for what had happened; and recrimination took the field. In Congress circles the feeling hardened that the paramount power would yield only to pressure on the grand scale, and Mr. Gandhi, prompted by the "inner voice", decided that the time had come to issue an injunction to the British Government to "Quit India". Behind that decision lay a conviction that the only way whereby India could secure her rightful place in the economy of nations, and pull her weight effectively in the interests of world peace, was to assume control forthwith of her own affairs: so he demanded that the paramount power should, without further ado, hand over charge to a popularly elected government and gracefully withdraw from the scene. At first, it seemed that the injunction applied to all British people in India, and there was much alarm and indignation in consequence, moderated, however, by the reflection that this was the voice of a visionary rather than a responsible politician. To allay this alarm Mr. Gandhi announced that "no physical withdrawal of every Englishman was meant. What he meant was the withdrawal of the British domination." But there could be no mistaking the purport of the challenge: it was a call to the British Government to abdicate. That is something the British Government is not in the habit of doing, and to ask it to do so in the thick of a ghastly war, when the very existence of the Empire was at stake, was asking not only the unreasonable but the impracticable.

Mr. Gandhi had some difficulty in bringing the Congress round to his point of view. Many of the leaders saw more clearly than he did the inherent dangers in the proposed plan of action, but so great was their respect for the man who had done so much to give to India a new sense of her destiny that with few exceptions they voted for the "Quit India" Resolution when it came before the fateful meeting of the Congress Working Committee on July 14, 1942. The Resolution then adopted is a long and reasoned statement, and one or two of its salient points might be studied with profit. For example:

"In making the proposal for the withdrawal of British rule from India, Congress has no desire whatever to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied Powers in their prosecution, of the war, or in any way to encourage aggression on India or, of course, pressure on China by the Japanese or any other power associated with the Axis group.

"Nor is it the Congress intention to jeopardize the defensive capacity of the Allied powers. Congress is therefore agreeable to the stationing of the armed forces of the Allies in India should they so desire in order to ward off and resist Japanese or other aggression and to protect and help China.

"The proposal for the withdrawal of British power from India was never intended to mean the physical withdrawal of all Britons from India, and certainly not those who would make India their home and live there as citizens and as equals with others.

"If such a withdrawal takes place with goodwill, it would result in establishing a stable provisional government in India and co-operation between this government and the United Nations in resisting aggression and helping China.

"Congress realizes that there may be risks involved in such a course. Such risks, however, have to be faced by any country in order to achieve freedom, and more especially at the present critical juncture in order to save the country and the larger cause of freedom the world over from far greater risks and perils.

"While, therefore, the Congress is impatient to achieve its national purpose, it wishes to take no hasty step and would like to avoid as far as possible any course of action that might embarrass the United Nations.

"Congress would plead with British power to accept the very reasonable and just proposals herein made not only in the interests of India, but also in those of freedom and of the cause of freedom to which the United Nations proclaim their allegiance."

It is charitable to infer that Congress meant their Resolution

to be regarded as a basis for discussion with a view to reaching an honourable compromise, and so the Government might have regarded it had it not been accompanied by what in their judgment amounted to an ultimatum and a threat. Here then is the "ultimatum" and also the implied "threat"

"Should, however, this appeal fail, Congress cannot view without the gravest apprehension the continuation of the present state of affairs, involving progressive deterioration in the situation and the weakening of India's will and power to resist aggression.

"Congress will then reluctantly be compelled to utilize all the non-violent strength it has gathered since 1920, when it adopted non-violence as part of its policy for the vindication of its political rights and liberties.

"Such a widespread struggle would inevitably be under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi."

The Resolutions of the Working Committee were in due course submitted to the All-India Congress Committee which met in Bombay on August 8, 1942. That date will rank as one of the most eventful in India's long and crowded calendar. The Government had held their hand until the Bombay meeting, hoping, as did many law-abiding citizens, that wiser counsels would prevail. But the All-India Congress Committee endorsed with slight emendations the Resolution of July 14. In fact, the Resolution of August 8 gave clearer definition to the alleged "threat" of July 14. It now read:

"The Committee therefore resolves to sanction, for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale so that the country may utilize all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last twenty-two years of peaceful struggle."

What was envisaged was mass civil disobedience, a general strike "of a non-violent character".

[illegible]

has stalked across the land; India has borne a gallant part in the united war effort : surely the time is auspicious for a fresh start as suggested in Chapter I. India must not lose her birthright.

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## "THE BEST HOPE OF RURAL INDIA"

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INDIA, as all the world knows, is pre-eminently an agricultural country. It is quite true that the age of industry is coming in like a tide; but for the time being India's population is 85 per cent rural. Since to the peasant has been given the stewardship of the soil he is India's key man. Slowly and somewhat painfully he is beginning to realize himself, and the day is not far distant when through the prerogative of the franchise he will hold the destiny of his country in his hands. Mr. Gandhi's famous prediction is well known: "The future of India will be settled not by her cities but by her villages." But all is not well with the Indian village. Poverty, debt, disease, illiteracy and litigation hold the peasants in thrall and "freeze the genial currents of their soul".

There is historical warrant for the assumption that the Indian village was once a self-contained community, wherein service was the guiding principle and the common mind the supreme authority. The priest, teacher and banker were as much the servants of the community as the carpenter, blacksmith and barber, while all were dependent on the tiller of the soil. The term *mahajan*, literally "great man", was then a term of respect, whereas in these degenerate days it is synonymous with "Shylock". Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, one of India's greatest sons, describes village conditions in these words: "To-day for various reasons villages are fatally neglected. They are fast degenerating into serfdom and compelled to offer to the ungrateful towns cheerless and unintelligent labour for work carried on in an unhealthy and impoverished environment."

In the masterly Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, over which Lord Linlithgow presided, this sombre

prediction occurs : " If co-operation fails there will fail the best hope of rural India." Co-operation, understood as a democratic system of banking and a plan for the better ordering of rural life, has not wrought the miracle its friends anticipated; but it has demonstrated its right to a permanent place in rural economy. My interest in co-operation arose on this wise : I had been preaching to an unresponsive village crowd when a man suddenly shot this challenge at me, " We are all slaves of the money-lender; tell us how to get free and we will listen to your message." That sent me to a study of Co-operative Credit. With the co-operative store and its ramifications I had long been familiar in Scotland; but of co-operative credit I knew nothing, save that it was a popular system of banking that claimed Germany as its home and had received the blessing of Lord Curzon. To lighten my darkness I wrote to the Registrar of Co-operative Societies and received from him a goodly supply of literature. He very wisely advised me to study the writings of the distinguished authority, H. W. Wolff, which I did with edification and profit.

#### WHAT IS CO-OPERATION ?

As practised in India, co-operation has been defined by one of its experts as " the combination of several individuals to obtain by their united energies and strength the advantage of large-scale dealing in production, distribution and credit". And he points out that " its moving spirit is more moral than material ". These two elements in co-operation find expression in the familiar slogans, " All for each and each for all ", and " Better farming, better business and better living ". In Great Britain, which is its spiritual home, co-operation spells distribution, and operates in the interests of the consumer, rather than the producer. In India, because of the high incidence of indebtedness, the emphasis is on credit; and the interests of the producer are the primary consideration. Co-operative credit, then, means the application of the principles of co-operation to the elementary rules of sound banking. In effect, it makes the cultivator his own banker, and brings the ready money he needs

within reach at rates of interest much lower than those charged by the indispensable money-lender.

Co-operation addresses itself directly to the easing of the burden of indebtedness by attacking the evil of borrowing at high rates of interest. The estimates of India's rural indebtedness are staggering in their magnitude. For example, the total agricultural debt of British India, including Burma, is put at six hundred crores of rupees, roughly £450,000,000. The average rate of interest charged by the money-lender is still in the neighbourhood of 25 per cent, and there can be no doubt that one root cause of the prevailing indebtedness is past borrowing at an exorbitant rate of interest. Of the Province of Bihar a witty friend, given to exaggeration, once stated that out of ten cultivators nine are in debt, and the tenth is a money-lender. The official estimate for all India is one money-lender to 367 people. In the Punjab, where "the peasant is born in debt, lives in debt and dies in debt", the proportion is 1 to 100. These figures will help to explain why co-operation in India naturally followed the "credit" path. By organizing him into societies of ten or more members on the basis of joint liability, the peasant's credit is strengthened and he is able to borrow at an economic rate of interest. Let us now see how co-operative credit works.

#### OUR FIRST CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

A village within bowshot of the Mission was chosen chiefly because the Mission cook and the orderly of the district magistrate lived there. The first move was to interest the village, and we entrusted to the cook the rumour that if ten men of good character joined together they could borrow at 15½ per cent per annum, as against the 25 or even 50 of the money-lender. It was enough: the next day came a battalion and the discussions began. Four Hindu castes with representatives from the Muhammadan and Christian communities were present, and the bond of a common economic need made us forget for the time being our unhappy divisions. The only thing that gave us pause was the grim doctrine of joint un-



limited liability, under which the members are individually and collectively responsible for the debts of the society. The bye-laws gave some trouble, but this was ultimately overcome and an elaborate statement of assets and liabilities was drawn up, in which each prospective member saw himself resolved into an impressive balance sheet with a considerable closing balance on the wrong side. The next step was to inform the Registrar that fifteen candidates were ready for examination. This he carried through himself with a High Court air about him which rather depressed our band of hope. However, in the end he announced in his best official manner. "I think they will do." And do they did.

A formal application for registration had to be sent in, and we set about the task of getting it signed and thumb impressed. One or two important signatures were difficult to obtain, but the papers were finally sent to the village for acceptance. A week passed and the papers came back headed by a despondent deputation. The leader said, "This joint liability is too much for us: it may do elsewhere, but it won't work in Chittauri." However, seeing our disappointment, he said, "Give us another week. Our leader, Jokhan Singh, is away: when he returns we will consult him and let you know." True to their word they came again, and with them came Jokhan Singh. His intervention saved the situation. "Will you join the bank and accept liability with us?" was his first question. "Most certainly," I replied. "my name is first on the list of members." "That will do," he said; "this is a good thing, put down my name also." The preliminaries were duly overcome, and on April 15, 1916, the Chittauri Co-operative Society was registered and received its charter. The initial capital was advanced by a friendly Muhammadan lawyer to the extent of £20, and the bank began business. These were not the days of frenzied finance. From that humble beginning a Central Co-operative Bank, with a working capital of £50,000 came into being, with an affiliated network of two hundred village societies. Later developments did not bear out the early promise of the venture, and many of the societies fell out by the way; but the original society prospered. We have to record with sorrow that many

of our Indian rural areas are strewn with the bones of dead co-operative societies; but this has not weakened our faith in co-operation as "the best hope of rural India".

The primary aim of the society was to deliver its members out of the hands of the money-lender, but it did not stop there. It sought "to promote in every way the well-being of its members" and open the gates of friendliness, fellowship and neighbourliness. How interesting the monthly meetings, held on the day of the full moon, were. The business over, the things that lay nearest the life of the village were talked over and plans laid for reform. Litigation was the bane of this particular village, the *rajputs* (the soldier caste) being prominent in this connection, and we got a chance to preach the golden rule of arbitration, with the happy result that some cases were withdrawn from the Court and amicably settled. These endeavours at arbitration revealed that behind much of this seeming senseless going to law lay a sense of offended right and a sensitiveness to injustice that was natural; and they taught me the priceless habit of hearing a story through to the end. I learned much of the intricacies of boundary disputes, and developed a high respect for that fine example of British administration, the tenant's Record of Rights. All this gave me an insight into family feuds that made me think sadlier and yet kindlier of human nature.

These monthly meetings were admirable experiments in self-government. Everything had to be done according to the bye-laws, and often the great prerogative of the vote had to be exercised; and it did not take long to discover that in dealing with matters that lay within their ken the village elders could, and did, arrive at sound conclusions. Sometimes personal considerations affected the wavering balance; but on the whole these village councillors could be trusted to form as just judgments as the city fathers of the neighbouring municipality would. In this fact was found a good omen for a wide extension of the franchise, and an urgent plea for the promotion of adult education.

## THE STORY OF GOSABA

When croakers croak, and critics pass adverse judgments on co-operation, as a workable plan of social engineering, we recall Gosaba and take courage. What, where, and why is Gosaba? It is a co-operative commonwealth carved out of the salt-sodden and tiger-infested jungles of the Sundarbans district in the Province of Bengal by the initiative and organizing genius of the late Sir Daniel Hamilton, a successful Calcutta business man who, in carrying out his ideas, employed the co-operative method, and gathered round him a group of enthusiastic Bengali disciples, to whom his example is still guiding star. It lies roughly fifty miles south-east of Calcutta and is easily reached by rail and steamer. How did it come into being? The answer is that, unlike Topsy, it is a creation and not a natural growth. Colonies and co-operative commonwealths do not grow spontaneously in jungles and desert places; they have to be made to grow. Sir Daniel Hamilton, before he died, gave this explanation: "I had a taste for farming and a desire to do something for the man who was denied the chance to earn an honest livelihood." But behind that taste and desire lay a Family Bible, a Shorter Catechism, a Kirk, a School, a Bank—to him the Scots pound-note was the sacred symbol of character—the poems of Burns, the economic gospel of John Ruskin, and a life disciplined by hard work and enriched by wide reading. Having seen the vision, Sir Daniel approached the Government of Bengal and acquired on favourable terms and on leases for forty years, with the option of renewal, four large concessions of uncultivated jungle land amounting to 22,000 acres, and set himself to the colossal task of making them fit for human habitation. That was in 1903. The residents of that time were a few wood-cutters, a few honey collectors and a few hunters, who shared with tigers and crocodiles the amenities of the jungle. The scene has changed since these early exciting days: instead of the tiger and crocodile and the few human denizens has sprung up a self-respecting peasantry 16,000 strong. The uncultivated jungle has given

place to fields of waving grain, and Gosaba rice ranks high in the markets of Bengal. The initial hazards were formidable. They included the clearing of the jungle, the preparation of the soil, the securing of suitable settlers and the provision of an adequate supply of drinking water.

### THE LAST CLOD

It was my privilege to be present when the ceremony of laying the last clod on the embankment, that marked the successful conclusion of an important stage of these early struggles, and a brief account will be in order.

The work of reclamation was done in stretches. The area to be reclaimed was delimited by earthen embankments which served the double purpose of keeping out the corroding saline waters and conserving the rainfall. Thus banked up, the attack on the jungle began, and as the ground was cleared the labourers who had done the clearing were given the first chance to settle on it. To facilitate entrance into their new heritage they were given loans—usually £20—on equitable terms of repayment to enable them to begin farming and build simple dwelling-houses. Opportunity, hard work and honest dealing resulted in many cases in smiling, happy homesteads, rich in garden produce and bright with flowers. All the settlers did not make good; but remembering the frailty of human nature this is not surprising: the all-important thing is that Gosaba has given to many of the disinherited, irrespective of caste or creed, an opportunity to rise to the dignity of manhood.

But to the embankment. It was an amazing and deeply moving scene that greeted us. Here, in the heart of the jungle, was gathered a company of five hundred, and such a company, the under-privileged, the illiterate and the beholden, men for whom life held no glittering prizes, underfed, disfigured by disease and want, scarcely a good physical specimen among them: here they were, wistful, curious, hopeful. A small clearing with the soft mud beneath us and two tattered sails above us, we sat on a bench that might have been carved by an ancient Briton, while the crowd swarmed round. The ceremony was brief:

an opening song in Bengali, a short prayer in Hindi, offered by myself and loudly applauded, a short and characteristic speech by Sir Daniel Hamilton—he addressed his hearers as though they had been senators—a brief address by a Hindu friend, another song, and then Lady Hamilton with grace and dignity laid the last clod on the completed earthen wall. When she spoke a few sentences in familiar, happy Bengali, the hearers felt they belonged to the family circle, and their hearts warmed to the touch of a generous friendship. They gave the name of “Sadhupur”—home of the pure—to the new enclosure, in the hope that it would become the “abode of honest men”.

#### HOW CO-OPERATION CAME TO GOSABA

In building up his colony Sir Daniel Hamilton employed the co-operative method, and it remains now to tell how this came about. One of the sights of Gosaba is old Arjoon Mondol, with his happy homestead, his well-filled threshing-floor, his thriving cottage garden, his substantial bank balance and his silver-mounted staff presented to him by a former Governor of Bengal, “to drive away money-lenders”. Old Arjoon was not always thus. In 1911 he was in the grip of the money-lender, his original loan of fifty rupees (£3 10s.) having swollen by compound interest and other devious devices to five hundred rupees (£35). His land, and that of his son, covering some twenty-five acres, was mortgaged, with the depressing result that after paying the money-lender’s half-share of the land produce, meeting his rent and cultivation expenses, barely £10 remained to meet the family budget, and nothing in hand to meet even the interest on the loan capital. His story moved Sir Daniel to action: Gosaba could not prosper half slave, half free. So he resolved to liquidate the money-lender. Entrenched in his legal position the latter stood out for his bond, and nothing but the bond; and the Gosaba estate, as it then was, had to lend the five hundred rupees before Arjoon could get his release. Within five years he repaid this advance, and looked the whole world in the face, for he owed not any man. Other

tenants in similar plight were dealt with in the same way by buying out the money-lenders, who were driven to seek pastures new. Their place was taken by the co-operative society, which in this congenial soil has reached a pitch of excellence unexcelled in India. As villages came into being the new order of finance was introduced. "Every village a co-operative society, and every village a school" was the slogan. The villagers were brought together, drilled in the principles of co-operation, their assets and liabilities duly assessed, and organized into societies governed by the *panchayat*, or "committee of five". At first the estate advanced the initial capital; but as the colony grew and the number of societies multiplied, a Central Co-operative Bank was established, and this became not only the central financing agency but also the supervising authority. The village societies now number twenty-four, with a working capital of £3,000 and reserve funds amounting to £2,000. The interests of the consumer are now coming into the picture in the shape of a Central Co-operative Store which meets the essential domestic needs of the people. Crowning all is the Co-operative Rice Mill, whose tall chimney is the first glimpse of Gosaba that greets the visitor. The mill is owned by the settlers themselves, the number of shareholders being about six hundred; and it is here the cultivators bring their produce for husking, assessing and marketing. The link with the outside world is the Central Co-operative Paddy Sale Society in Calcutta, in which it is the predominant partner.

The rice mill is the key to the co-operative success of Gosaba. The co-operators supply their grain to the mill at rates in keeping with prevailing market rates; the mill gives a bond to the Central Bank for the amount to be paid, and the bank in turn credits this to the village society concerned. In this same process the tenant's rent and his co-operative bank dues are realized and the accumulation of arrears that has broken the back of co-operative banking in some parts of India.

The rural philosophy exemplified holds that, rightly organized—a task only the State can adequately undertake—the people of rural India should be able to support the essential services of education, health, agricultural research and all else

necessary to rural well-being, and at the same time provide employment for an increasing number of educated men and women. So in this co-operative commonwealth is to be found an education service which includes a network of 21 village schools, 20 night schools, with a middle and secondary school at the centre, to which is attached a weaving school and an experimental farm. The day schools have an attendance of 850 scholars, and the night schools 400. These include boys and girls. Fitting into the general scheme is a health service manned by four doctors—one a homeopath—three nurses, and served by three dispensaries. The interesting thing to note is that these services are maintained by the people themselves through a small tax added to their rents. There is no time to go round the institutions of Gosaba; but mention must be made of the Rural Reconstruction Institute, with its arresting motto—"FEAR GOD, WORK HARD, BE HONEST"—where young men are educated for rural life and service. When they qualify, after two years' training, they receive the unique degree of "Master of the Art of Independent Livelihood". This is a very inadequate description of co-operation in action, where West and East have combined to demonstrate that "the best hope of rural India" is more than an idle dream.

#### A CO-OPERATIVE PIONEER

Before closing this chapter I should like to go back to Jokhan Singh, an Indian "village Hampden". It was he that made Chittauni safe for co-operation. He was an arresting figure as he appeared that memorable morning. No longer young, he must have been over sixty, the burden of years lay lightly on his shoulders, and his step had lost but little of its fleetness. He stood 5 feet 7 inches; but strongly built with the thigh of a wrestler and the eye of a pathfinder. His first visit was followed by many others, a chair set apart for him, and he came and went as inclination and bank business moved him. He had a way with him that soon captured the two sons of the Mission. Largely fascinated by the thumb impression device, they too clamoured for admission to the bank, and we handed them

over to Jokhan Singh for examination. I hear him now across the years putting leading questions, and see him taking their thumb impressions over and over again with solemn joy till the verandah walls were decorated with specimens, and the righteous indignation of their mother came down on co-operation and all its ways. Unlearned in the learning of the schools, his native wit and practical knowledge stood him in good stead, and he had a peculiar aptitude for mental arithmetic. In this connection, his triumph over the young Mission preacher who acted as secretary of the co-operative society was decisive. By a process of calculation all his own, Jokhan Singh had discovered an overcharge of twopence in his account, and when the monthly meeting came round he introduced the matter with a wink that Samuel Weller could hardly have bettered. The secretary, backed by a lightning interest calculator, stood his ground; but the recount went against him, and it was then our village Hampden delivered himself of this historic utterance: "Though I have never been to school, and have lived these sixty years and more without book learning, no one has ever got the better of me in money matters." The law courts also knew him as a successful litigant and an unpromising subject for cross-examination. He seldom touched on politics, and I gathered he had little use for politicians; but he paid this tribute to Mr. Gandhi: "God sends but one Mahatma Gandhi in a thousand years." Non-violence, however, was not his creed. He loved a fight, and in his younger days could wield a club with the best. A favourite theme with him was the decadence of the Rajput—his own caste and the warrior caste of India—and he moralized on this wise, "Fighting is our religion, but the hands that were meant to wield the sword now guide the plough; the age of manliness is gone and we are become a race of ploughmen." For this he was inclined to blame the British Raj, whose advent had turned the sword of the Rajput into the ploughshare of the farmer! He was careful to exempt the King Emperor from criticism; but he regarded all the King's ministers with suspicion. One of his quaintest parables had to do with an ancient worthy who, when offered a boon by a certain king, said, "Give me Your



Majesty's ear for ten minutes every morning, and I will ask for nothing more."

Jokhan Singh held the faith of his fathers; but he was catholic in his religious views and came to church frequently. To Him whom we worship as Saviour and Lord he paid reverent homage, but called Him by another Name. His faith held him when the great fire laid his house in ruins, and we helped to fight the flames. "It is the will of God," he said, and began to build anew. Fair weather attended him at the last. Thanks to the Co-operative Bank he lived to see his debts paid off, his son established as a permanent Government servant of low degree, and his granddaughter safely married. I was absent when the call came to him to cross the last ferry; but I know it held no fears for him. I bless the kindly Providence that made Jokhan Singh my friend. There are many such in rural India, and as I think of them I do not fear for the future of that fascinating land.

## "A STRANGE MAN"—MAHATMA GANDHI

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IN the memorable and darkly shadowed non-party conference that met in Delhi in the spring of 1943 to consider the situation arising out of Mr. Gandhi's fast, the distinguished South Indian leader, Mr. Rajagopalachari, in opening the proceedings, referred to the Mahatma as "a strange man". There, I think, lies one explanation of the extraordinary hold he has on the mind and heart of multitudes of his people. Another, which this fast brought vividly to mind, is his capacity for suffering. The marks he bears are authentic. He is indeed a strange man, India's enigma Number One, and even his intimate friends cannot tell what he will say or do next; but behind this element of surprise lies that intangible quality we call personality that draws men and women to him like a magnet. These fastings, silences, dietings, slogans, and appeals to an "inner voice", that seem so strange to us, rally his clansmen all the readier to his standard. "Were you less materialistic you would understand him better," was how one of his friends put it to me. On one great issue there seems little doubt: to multitudes within and without India this strange man *is India*, the soul of a people on the march. Whether we understand him or not, he is India's man, and to India he stands or falls.

### OUR FIRST MEETING

I well remember the day he first appeared on our verandah. That was in 1916, not long after his return from South Africa. We were then stationed in Motihari, the capital of Champaran in the Province of Bihar and Orissa, and he had come to look into certain agrarian grievances. These had to do chiefly with

the growing of indigo and its subsequent abandonment, the oppressions of landlords and the exactions of money-lenders. He was then the friend of peasant and Government alike, and as a result of his preliminary enquiries the Provincial Government set up a Champaran Agrarian Commission and very wisely made him a member of it. He showed then a capacity for compromise which, notwithstanding many rather bad shocks, I think he still retains. The Report of this Commission led to the passing of the Champaran Agrarian Act and the liquidation of many long standing grievances. For his share in helping to right these agrarian wrongs, Mr. Gandhi won the gratitude and affection of the Champaran people; and there are no homes in India where he is more loved and revered than in the village homes of Champaran.

We saw much of him in these days. He loved to slip away from the eager, exacting crowd and exchange its clamour for the peace of the Mission House. I see him now coming down the garden path with alert and eager step, the step of a man who knows where he is going and means to get there. Dressed in the simple garb of a well-to-do peasant, slightly built but not diminutive, his otherwise unimpressive features lighted up by fine eyes and a disarming smile, and these allied to a voice as low and sweet as that of Annie Laurie of pathetic memory, made him ever a welcome visitor. We were all impressed by his intensity and sense of purpose, and I remember a European member of the Champaran Agrarian Commission saying to me, "Mr. Gandhi reminds me of the Apostle Paul." He spoke much of his life in South Africa, particularly of his friendship with missionaries there, and the long, hard fight he fought to secure the elementary rights of citizenship to Indian settlers. While he spoke little of the indignities he himself had borne, we could see that the iron had entered his soul, and sent him home to India to become the champion of independence and equality for his people.

It is often said that Mr. Gandhi's experiences in South Africa have made him an implacable enemy of the white man. He did not give me that impression. Whatever else may be charged against this strange man, I do not think that racialism

can justly be included in the indictment. True, he declaims against the "Satanic British Government", and finds it difficult to detach the machinist from the machinery; but, broadly speaking, he has no ill will against the British as individuals, and he counts many of them among his friends. He often referred to the late C. F. Andrews—another champion of "the poor whom men's eyes forget"—as his "blood-brother". His sense of humour was too keen, and his faith in humanity too strong for him to harbour race hatred. I recall with interest that the young members of the family took kindly to him.

I must leave as a subject of conversation to some future sederunt of an Indian Brains Trust the question, "Would it have been better for India had Mr. Gandhi never gone to South Africa?" There can be no doubt that these twenty eventful years spent in a foreign land had a great influence on his subsequent career. For one thing they fanned his smouldering patriotism into a lambent flame, and made him a rebel for ever against race supremacy. In South Africa he lighted on the truth of non-violence and heard the call to identify himself with the sufferings of his fellow Indians. There, also, he fashioned the weapon of non-violent non-co-operation when peaceful persuasion failed, a weapon he used with devastating effect later on in India. Many who have received the honour in India will not forget that it was in South Africa he received the Kaiser-i-Hind medal "for distinguished public service". On the other hand, these twenty years in South Africa are likely to be remembered when India faces the great issue of her future relation to the British Commonwealth of Nations.

#### HIS ATTITUDE TO CHRISTIANITY

The question is often asked, "Is Mr. Gandhi a Christian?" The answer is No. He himself has explicitly declared that he finds in Hinduism, the faith of his fathers, all that his spirit needs and craves. Much as he reveres the Bible—and he turns frequently to its pages—he finds that the Scriptures of Hindu-

ism, and particularly the Bhagavat Gita, speak more directly to his condition than do the Christian Scriptures. To him the "inner voice" is the final court of appeal on moral issues, and to this secret shrine he turns when great decisions have to be taken. I wonder if Robert Burns had something like this in mind when he wrote, "Even the light that led astray was light from heaven." I am of those who think that the Mahatma's interpretations of this inner voice have sometimes led him into devious ways with unhappy consequences. Be that as it may, I cannot think of any Christian creed that he could sign without substantial mental reservation. While the Mahatma was more or less at home in the outer courts of the Christian Church, he was never able to make the decisive affirmation, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God", that would have led him into "the secret place of the Most High" and into the essential fellowship of the Church of Christ.

In those early days I think he was nearer the Christian position, understood in the evangelical sense, than in his later years. It may be his patriotism gave new direction to his religion. I recall an occasion when he spoke to a group of Hindus, Moslems and Christians who were members of an English Bible Class, when he took as his subject the well known thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians. He mentioned then that in times of stress he read this chapter daily, and he advised his hearers to do the same. There can be little doubt that he saw in this Pauline interpretation of love a confirmation of his own doctrine of non-violence, and I cannot share the cynical view that Mr. Gandhi's creed of non-violence is a cloak to ingrained race prejudice. He has said and done things that only a sincere lover of truth could say and do. For instance, there is that fine saying of his, "If the doctrine of transmigration be true, and I am destined to be reborn, I pray that I may be born an untouchable that I may think and feel as an untouchable." In defiance of powerful Hindu caste sentiment he took an untouchable child into his family and brought her up as a daughter of the house. So we have the paradox: this friend of Christians is at the same time a

formidable opponent of the Christian faith. A staunch believer in Hinduism, he looks with apprehension on any rival religion that seeks to detach its followers from their ancestral faith. For this reason he has given his powerful support to the Hindu crusade against proselytizing.

#### SAINT OR POLITICIAN?

The question is essentially one for India to decide, but since it has a fascination for enquiring minds in the West an answer is called for. India would, of course, say that Mr. Gandhi is both saint and politician, and those nearest him would probably add that he is more saint than politician. In that judgment I concur. Some months back a well-conditioned gentleman who had dined both wisely and well remarked to me with an air of finality, after we had exchanged views on the Indian deadlock, "Well, whatever else Mr. Gandhi may be, he is not a saint." When I demurred, he informed me, to my surprise, that I was "pro-Hindu". Judged by Christian standards, which require complete devotion to the person and service of the Lord Jesus Christ as the essential quality in saintship, this strange man would have no recognized standing ground; but to his own people, who derive their religious standards from other sources, and regard poverty, self-denial, simplicity, suffering, and devotion to the service of others as the essential things in the life and character of the saint, he measures up well, and it ill becomes us to belittle the homage his people spontaneously give him.

Sometimes the Western critic takes this line—"Mr. Gandhi is an astute politician masquerading as a saint." The cynical suggestion is that this strange man poses as a saint when he is not really one. Now to masquerade as a saint is a comparatively easy part to play if it has not to be kept up for a long spell, but in this case it is an habitual exercise, the practice of nearly a life-time. If the cynic be right, then surely this Indian Dr. Jekyll would sometimes be recognized as Mr. Hyde. But Mr. Gandhi has been able to escape exposure throughout a long and public pilgrimage. A politician he certainly is,

but it is a mistake to assume that he is an astute one. If he were, fewer blunders on a big scale would be charged against him. We can hardly conceive of an astute politician promulgating a policy so fraught with risk as the "Quit India" policy. Only a saint with an invincible faith in the innate goodness of human nature and an unquestioning confidence in the infallibility of non-violence could have sponsored such a cast of fortune. Although at home in the politics of the market-place, where bargaining is the very breath of life, high politics is not the Mahatma's native air. "Man is more than constitutions" is his creed. Those who saw him in action at the Round Table Conference in London tell us that he seemed a visitant from another world. He is certainly not a student of Hansard, nor is he instructed enough in the rules of the game to be an "astute" politician.

*I have heard this statement made with much assurance, "When things are going well, and agreement is in sight, Mr. Gandhi intervenes and upsets everything."* The implication may be that there is an impish strain in the Mahatma that delights to throw an occasional spanner into the machinery. Mr. Gandhi has certainly a sense of humour, but few would admit that he is a mischief-maker. The critic may mean that this man loves the limelight and covets the centre of the picture, not for altruistic but for ulterior motives. It might be urged that his past services entitle him to a place at the centre, but that he loves to be there simply for the sake of being there is an unfair innuendo. It has been widely alleged that Mr. Gandhi's intervention in the Delhi conversations with Sir Stafford Cripps wrecked what seemed to be a hopeful prospect of agreement. Mr. Rajagopalachari, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and others in the know, have repudiated that allegation, and I believe it is now generally discredited. It will be remembered that Mr. Gandhi went to Delhi on the invitation of Sir Stafford Cripps, and not on his own initiative. It would still be possible to argue, however, that his influence was all the time operating in Delhi; but it would not be true to say that he intimidated his colleagues and bent them to his imperious will. Mr. Gandhi must accept his share of responsibility for the present unhappy





that bad finance was at the root of all India's ill, recounted the humble origin and subsequent triumph of the Scottish one-pound note, and enlarged, somewhat to the Mahatma's bewilderment, on the dynamic qualities of a paper currency, while the latter reviewed his not altogether successful efforts to reconstruct rurally his own immediate neighbourhood. Even a Mahatma finds rural reconstruction a stubborn task. An unexpected lull in the conversation enabled me to ask the artless question, "What would you say was the greatest need of the Indian peasant?" Sir Daniel, with co-operative credit in his mind, answered in one word, HONESTY. Mr. Gandhi, with Swaraj in his mind, went one word better and said, INTELLIGENT HONESTY.

The interview ended with a beautiful incident. From his capacious coat pocket, Sir Daniel produced a small home-made flute, a product of the colony of Gosaba, and presented it to his friend as a memento of their meeting. "Will you not play a tune, Sir Daniel?" asked Mr. Gandhi; whereupon Sir Daniel, a musician of no mean order, played "The Rowan Tree", followed by "The Lord is my Shepherd" to the tune Stracathro, while our family circle looked on and listened entranced. Taking his flute with him, and accompanied by his faithful secretary and friend, the late Mahadeo Desai, he drove away under cover of the friendly darkness, while Nagpur went to sleep, all unconscious that Mahatma Gandhi had been for a brief space within her gates. A distinguished American Mission Secretary visiting us at the time, who was present at the interview, said, "I shall look back on this as the finest hour I have spent in India." For us, also, there will always be gladness in the memory of it. Kipling was right after all:

"But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed,  
nor Birth,  
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come  
from the ends of the earth."

I have often regretted that these two strong lovers of India had neither the sanction nor the time to sit down and draft the Constitution India is to enjoy when the war is over.

# THE MAHATMA AND THE WAR

Another meeting, revealing perhaps a truer Mr. Gandhi, comes to mind. By this time the war was well on its tragic way, and things were going none too well with the Allies. Committed to the creed of non-violence, and therefore opposed to all war, and regarding the present war as Britain's rather than India's, Mr. Gandhi did not see his way to support the Government war effort. At the same time he refrained from actively obstructing it, content, at least in the early stages, to register his protest by means of individual civil disobedience against the restrictions on personal liberty imposed by the methods of Government in prosecuting the war effort. His protest had as its primary aim the vindication of the right of free speech. That it might not embarrass Government unduly, he did not carry it to the gates of factories or to the barracks of the soldiery. But his opposition was a disturbing element in a very difficult and disquieting situation.

A small group of British missionaries had done what they could in the interests of unity, and urged the Government to make an explicit declaration of British policy, such as Sir Stafford Cripps made a year later. Since we had approached the Government, it seemed only right that we should approach Mr. Gandhi also, and a meeting was arranged. We went to his village home for the purpose, and my companion was a trusted missionary colleague, one well skilled in the dialectical method. It was an "off the record" talk, but at this late date no harm can be done if I give the gist of the conversation. We had a dim hope that it might be possible to reconcile the opposing methods of "soul force" and "physical force" in a common crusade against a common foe, for we knew that Mr. Gandhi abhorred Nazi aggression as keenly as we did. At the outset, we questioned the practical value of non-cooperation, and suggested that, instead of furthering, it was hindering the cause of national liberation. To this he demurred and claimed that the movement was steadily winning support everywhere. Then we urged that the protest of the conscien-

tious pacifist might be registered silently and not shouted in the market-place. But we soon discovered that Mr. Gandhi was thinking in terms of the conscientious political objector whose right to agitate must be upheld at all hazards. On this issue he was adamant. If it be asked why, I can but answer that the Mahatma is an Indian patriot to whom the winning of independence for his country is of greater moment than the winning of the war for Britain and her Allies. To him the question that mattered was the attainment of complete independence at the earliest possible moment by the direct method of non-violent agitation, and even the demands of a world war must not be allowed to retard it. Political agitation must, therefore, be carried on, war or no war. Let Britain grant the national demand, he cried, and India will bring all her resources to the help of the Allied cause, while, for his own part, he would continue to hold that non-violent non-co-operation was the only effective way to subdue the evil that is in the world. There we had to leave him, and I have not seen him since; but these reflections remain.

In this strange man idealism and realism inhere. His faith in non-violence is deep and strong, and it is based on his invincible faith in human goodness: there we see the idealist. Holding this faith as sincerely as he does, I find it hard to believe that the orgy of violence that followed his arrest and that of his immediate colleagues, in August 1942, had his sanction. What he contemplated was a general strike of a non-violent kind, but here the "inner voice" led him astray. I hope some day this tragic happening in the modern history of India will be reviewed by an able and more detached pen than mine. The case for the defence has yet to be stated. But there is another side to the shield: Mr. Gandhi believes in non-violent non-co-operation, which is rather different from passive resistance. It is the application of soul force to secure a desired end. In his case, it means the exercise of pressure—a non-violent general strike is a very powerful instrument of pressure—on the paramount power to make it accede to the national demand. There, I think, we can see the implacable, calculating, if short-sighted, realist. Like most of his kind, the

Mahatma believes that the only argument a Britain, reluctant to part with power, respects, is the argument of force, and since he regards soul force as the most potent kind of force, he applies it with all the strength at his command. Few may agree, but it seems to me that this attitude suggests the way out of the present deadlock. Could we convince this strange man that we really mean what we say, that full self-government is our goal as well as his: he is realist enough to come to terms. I see the same combination of idealism and realism in Mr. Jinnah: his dream of Pakistan can only come true with the goodwill of his Hindu neighbours. Surely, then, the Union envisaged by Sir Stafford Cripps must appeal to his political sense, for like the Mahatma, Mr. Jinnah is a practical mystic. Both these leaders must see that India, divided or undivided, cannot live in isolation; she must buy and sell in the markets of the world; she has a great part to play in maintaining world peace, and to play it well her own position must be made secure against any future storm. She must make her own choice; but I am of those who believe that her ideals and purposes will find their finest fulfilment in an equal and free partnership in the British Commonwealth of Nations. Apart from sentiment—I have seen too many British graves in India to reconcile me to separation—it is my conviction that India's partnership on equal terms in the British Commonwealth would be to her best material and moral interests, as it would also be to those of my own country. It would continue a great friendship and go far to lay the spectre of race prejudice.

I know Mr. Gandhi shared that hope at one time, but I am told he has since given it up in despair. It should surely not pass the wit of British statesmanship to give him back that hope. He is a strange man, and even his friends cannot tell what he will do next; but I verily believe that a magnanimous gesture of trust in his good faith would be more likely to win him back to the paths of co-operation which he followed when I knew him first, than the pressure of continued restraint. He is an old man now. His wife and lifelong companion is no longer by his side, and his faithful secretary and friend, Mahadeo Desai, has passed beyond his call. But life has still

a promise of worthy work to be done. Released unconditionally on medical grounds, the lion is unchained and "Richard is back in England", but most of his trusted comrades are still under restraint. Will he venture on one fight more? That he certainly will; for his heart is set on Swaraj, and Swaraj tarries. Many of his friends think that his native wit, prompted by the bitter experience of recent years, can be trusted to remind him that non-co-operation, whether violent or non-violent, is not a sure path to the goal of his dreams. The open gates of co-operation beckon alike to him and to the Viceroy. If he enter and carry on his last crusade in happy, understanding, equal co-operation, he will surely come to his kingdom. Whatever the Western world may think of him—saint, politician, visionary, rebel, little brother of the poor—in many a loyal Indian heart he is even now a king.

## WOMEN AND THE NATIONAL AWAKENING

THE wrongs of Indian womanhood have long been a compelling theme with Western writers, and Indian social reformers have not been slow to paint them in sombre colours. Much indignation has been aroused by disclosures regarding the "purdah system", signifying the seclusion of women; early marriage and its attendant suffering; the unhappy lot of the Hindu widow; the subordinate position accorded to women in the general scheme of things, and all apparently in accordance with the wisdom and sanction of some of the ancient sages. These sages have not dealt too kindly with Indian women, and texts can be cited to imply that Hindu and Moslem Scriptures agree that if a woman pleases her husband she fulfils the purpose of her being. Manu, the Hindu law-giver, is credited with the dictum, "A husband must constantly be revered as a god by a virtuous wife. No sacrifice is allowed to women apart from their husbands, no religious rite, no fasting; as far only as a wife honours her lord, so far is she exalted in heaven." It was necessary that the story of the wrongs of Indian womanhood should be told if reform were to be achieved, but it is not less necessary that the whole picture of the position of women in India should be presented with understanding and sympathy if kindlier feelings are to be engendered and nobler ideals established.

So national sentiment is calling attention to the other side of the shield. The glories of Indian womanhood in ages past are depicted in glowing colours; the chastity, constancy and courage of the incomparable-Sita, perhaps the finest feminine character—unless she were a goddess in woman's guise—in literature; the exploits of warrior queens; of gifted women who flourished in the court of Akbar, the greatest of all

splendidly they have seconded the efforts of their menfolk and given themselves to national service in hospitals, first-aid units, in factories, in hostels and canteens, eager to help in every possible way.

#### THE CALL OF THE MAHATMA

The national awakening turned the winter of Indian women's discontent into glorious summer, and provided Mahatma Gandhi with his readiest and most enthusiastic converts. They rallied to his standard from all ranks of society, from the town mansion to the village hut: ladies of fashion, doctors, nurses, teachers, fruit vendors, and women old and young from all the castes: all eager to do and dare for the country's sake. This strange man who came in the guise of an ascetic, with his trumpet call to claim Swaraj, his imperative command to spin and weave, to forswear comfort and accept hardship, appealed to instincts and emotions that the inhibitions of the ages had failed to stifle. In the Mahatma the women of India saw the champion for whom they had waited long. To them he was an Indian. Sir Galahad, the champion of the weak and undefended, the true and gentle knight whose banner is the emblem of a cause worth dying for. Like Father O'Flynn, Mr. Gandhi has "a wonderful way with him", and when the passive resistance movement was inaugurated, women sprang at his behest to a foremost place in the fight. They organized themselves into bands known as "Desh Sevikas", which might be interpreted as "servants of the country". Thus disciplined, they marched proudly in processions along crowded streets in all kinds of weather, picketed liquor and European shops with ingenious pertinacity, lay for weary hours on tram-lines, obstructing the traffic to the best of their ability, stretched themselves out in college doorways and corridors to hinder access on the part of the weaker student brethren who had not the courage to come out on strike. In their enthusiasm they welcomed arrest and went to jail with a cheer. It is estimated that, taking India as a whole, two thousand women, whose ages ranged

from eighteen to seventy-two, were imprisoned in the years 1929 to 1932. In these activities the observer, who has no immediate concern in the issues at stake, will see much mis-directed energy and much to regret; but if he looks closer he will recognize, amid much that is incongruous, service that has the quality of self-sacrifice, and courage of a high order. It was no easy thing for an Indian woman to break away from established custom, courting notoriety and abandoning home and children for a cause that held out little hope of an early triumph. But she did it.

#### ( A STUDY IN CONTRASTS

Indian womanhood is a study in contrasts. In grace and charm the Indian lady of gentle birth, who knows how to dress well, without the adventitious embellishments that Western fashion imposes upon the human form, leads her sisters in all the lands. The *sari*, which is the distinctive garment worn by the women of India, is an inspired adornment for an Eastern setting. When the World Missionary Conference convened at Tambaram, near Madras, the delegates of seventy different countries, while discussing matters of high import in Church and State, took occasion to look round and remark to each other, "Well, when it comes to dress, the women of India take the honours." Were Manu, the ancient law-giver, to return to India, he would be met by a charming Indian lady driving her own car! He would be surprised also to find that a daughter of Mr. Rajagopalachari, a Brahman of high degree, had married a son of Mr. Gandhi, a Hindu of a lower caste.

But it is not always thus. There is a village India where extreme poverty, though not necessarily sordid, makes living conditions unfavourable to the development of the social graces. Bad housing, inadequate nourishment, and the pressure of the daily struggle to make ends meet provide an inhospitable climate for the flowering of "sweetness and light". It is remarkable, however, how in spite of these inhibitions the village woman retains her poise. She retains also her share of original sin. When villagers get to quarrelling, as they often



do, the women are generally the first to enter the arena. Then, poise and gentleness take to themselves wings, the *sari* is left to adjust itself, voices shrill with passion, and replete with abusive language of the most uncompromising kind, rend the air. There is no communal monopoly of this wordy warfare! Christian and Moslem ladies as well as Hindu are skilled in the art. There is comfort in knowing that the battle is invariably a war of words; but it is ugly enough while it lasts. The moral surely is a warning against standardization. The village woman is a person of many moods. She is a diligent housewife, too fond of her children to be a good disciplinarian, and, as the seasons serve, she takes her place with her neighbours in the work of the fields, and sings along with them those lovely old songs of the seasons that are the heritage of the Indian peasant. In that fascinating and informative book, *Our India*, the author, Minoo Masani, gives one from the Bengali that runs as follows :

“Black Cloud, come down, come down;  
Flower-bearing Cloud, come down, come;  
Cloud like cotton, Cloud like dust,  
O let your sweat pour down.

Blind Cloud, Blind Cloud, come,  
Let your twelve Brother Cloudlets come,  
Drop a little water that we  
May eat good rice.

Soft Rain, gently fall,  
In the house the plough neglected lies,  
In the burning sun the farmer dies,  
O Rain with laughing face come.”

These Indian fields are far away now, but in memory one still hears with emotion the songs of the village women.

#### FROGS IN A WELL

Viewed from the standpoint of education, the position of Indian women has sometimes been described by ardent social

reformers as that of "frogs in a well". Accustomed to the dark, they have had neither the desire nor the opportunity to appropriate the benefits of education. These benefits were slow in coming. Even at this late hour only 5 per cent of Indian womanhood could be classified as literate. Addressing the All-India Women's Conference in 1927, the President, the Queen of Sangli, a small but progressive Native State, made this statement: "There was a time when the education of girls had not only no supporters but open enemies in India. Female education has by now gone through all the stages—total apathy, ridicule, criticism and acceptance. It may now be safely stated that anywhere in India the education of girls, as much as of boys, is recognized as a cardinal need, the *sine qua non* of national progress." That this change has come about has been due to the untiring zeal and patient endeavours of men and women whose names are held in universal honour. Of these the late Pandita Ramabai is held in affectionate remembrance both in India and overseas. Herself a Sanskrit scholar of repute, she showed a remarkable bent for Western learning, so that it could be said that "in her, West and East attained a rare synthesis". Nor will it be forgotten that women from other lands, missionaries and others, have rendered noble service to their Indian sisters in promoting female education.

Another name that stands out is that of Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy, who successfully introduced a Bill in the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1928 to put an end to the practice of dedicating girls to temples. It will be remembered that when the social reform movement was started it had to deal with the problem of the *devadasis*—the women who were dedicated to lives of singing and dancing, and engaged to perform at domestic and social festivities. The "anti-dance" movement, as it was called, met with strong opposition on the ground that it sought to destroy the ancient arts of music and the dance. The reverse has been the case. Social reform, hand in hand with the national awakening, is bringing back in purer form the grace and gaiety of the old time, and music and dancing are now the cherished possession of ladies of gentle birth. The swing of the pendulum is seen in the amazing way Indian art is invad-

the cinema world and producing Indian films of high quality. India has now her film stars.

In the splendid muster roll of Indian social reformers, honourable mention must be made of that grand old veteran, Mr. K. Natarajan, whose long and brilliant editorship of the *Indian Social Reformer* has been a consistent plea for the emancipation of Indian women. In his presidential address to the Social Conference in 1927, he made this comment: "The subject which most engaged our attention towards the close of last century was naturally the education of women, for it is the master key which unlocks all the doors of progress." Mr. Natarajan speaks of the "master key", the Simon Commission speak of the "key to progress", and Mr. F. L. Brayne, whose activities in the field of rural uplift are known far beyond Indian frontiers, proclaims at every turn, "Uplift the women and the village will uplift itself": wise statesmanship will surely pay heed to these voices. The present tides of political emotionalism will recede as India appropriates her birthright; but the task of turning that heritage into a free, contented, neighbourly and progressive state will depend to a large extent on the right use of the "keys".

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THE CHURCH IN INDIA

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It was fitting that the 1938 World Meeting of the International Missionary Council should be held in India, and fortunate that it should be housed at Tambaram, the spacious home of the Madras Christian College; for Christ's Church has been well and truly planted in Indian soil, and Tambaram, in whose fortunes a dozen Missions have a share, represents the fine fruit of missionary co-operation. Occupying a strategic position on one of the great highways of world communications, India has already become a base for extended military operations, and the time is fast approaching when it will become a base for extended operations in the Christian cause of world evangelism. From the standpoint of mere numbers—seven and a half million Christians of all denominations in a total population of well on to four hundred million—the Church would seem to be a very small drop in a very large bucket; but it holds the secret of inevitable growth, and each succeeding census sees a marked increase in numbers, influence and general respect.

The Church is no new thing in India. The Syrian Church in South India, divided into its two main branches of Orthodox and Reformed, claims to have been founded by no less a missionary than the Apostle Thomas. It might be difficult to prove that claim, but the scholars agree that it would be equally difficult to disprove it. There can be no shadow of doubt that the Syrian Church is a Church of ancient lineage that has weathered the storms of many centuries and kept alive, though often with difficulty, the sacred flame of Christian truth. Beset with fightings within—the tale of its many and prolonged litigations makes sad reading—and exposed to attacks, often of a proselytizing character, from without, it has held its ground and is to-day, particularly in its Reformed branch, a living

instrument of evangelism. Taking the two divisions together, we should be within the mark in stating that the Syrian Church represents a Christian community of approximately 700,000. From its ranks have gone out to all parts of India, to fill positions of trust, and bear witness to the Christian faith, a goodly company of well-educated and highly capable men and women. They have entered the world of business to a greater extent than their brethren in the other Christian camps.

The Roman Catholic Church staked its claim in the first instance by the coming of the Portuguese in 1478, and, more securely later, by the truly apostolic labours of that indomitable crusader St. Francis Xavier. To-day the Roman Catholic Communion provides a spiritual home for practically one-half of the Christian population of India.

But the subject of this chapter is the Church, or Churches, that came into being as the result of the missionary efforts of the Protestant Churches domiciled in Great Britain and Ireland, North America, the continent of Europe and the British Dominions. These Churches naturally produced after their kind, and in India all the familiar denominational varieties are to be found—Anglican, Baptist, Brethren, Congregational, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Salvation Army and others less easy to define. We need not shed tears over these denominational diversities: they are a carry over from the West, and India has no particular love for them. There is always the probability that had the Indian Church started with a clean denominational slate, so to speak, it would have found some occasion of its own to form separate doctrinal camps! But let us be glad that the general Christian mind is well disposed towards intercommunion and Church union. While it is true that denominationalism in the Western sense has still a hold in certain indigenous Christian circles, there is reason to believe that, left to themselves, the Indian Churches would find their way to organic unity.

## THE CHURCH AND THE NATION

The late Principal Rudra of St. Stephen's College, Delhi, a great Indian and a great Christian, often expressed his conviction that "An Indian nation needs an Indian Church". His words came back to me with new meaning as I listened recently to a session of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and realized afresh how vital a national Church, alert and responsive to the will of God, is to the strengthening of the moral fibre of the nation, and how fearless that Church should be in the discharge of its responsibility. By the grace of God, through the manifold labours of His servants, the Church has been planted in India, and nothing is more impressive than the way its influence is penetrating the life of the nation. In this Church one sees the vindication of the missionary enterprise and the romance of Christian Missions. There was a time when a missionary could say with some measure of truth, "There is no Church in India: there is only a crowd." He was thinking of widely diffused and ill-assorted groups of inadequately instructed disciples who, mindful of the loaves and fishes, gathered expectantly at the doors of the missionary: when the missionary passed, the crowd would pass with him. He made an exception in the case of the Syrian Church, which has maintained its position throughout the centuries without the help of missionaries from overseas, and made no small contribution to the moral, spiritual, social, economic and political well-being of the country as a whole.

But the Syrian Church apart, there are authentic marks of vitality and stability in the Church that has come into being as a result of the modern missionary movement. An illustration comes to mind from the World War of 1914-18. On the uplands of Chota Nagpur, in the Province of Bihar, the Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Mission, with a large staff of German missionaries, had carried on a remarkably successful work among the aboriginal tribes of the Mundas and Oraons. As a result of their labours a Christian community well over the 100,000 mark had been gathered in. Then came the war: the foreign missionaries were repatriated, and the Christians, bereft

of their fathers in God, found themselves—to quote their own expression—reduced to the position of “orphans”. What was to be done? Many friendly observers prophesied disaster—a return on the part of the Christians to the pit from which they had been dug. But there was no such retreat. Strong in their Lutheran faith the Christians stood firm and resolved to accept the great hazard of autonomy. Thus it came about that the Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Mission became the Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church. The infant Church, poor in this world’s goods although rooted in the soil, and little skilled in the business of administration, had to fight hard for its existence in the early years; but its faith was reinforced by generous financial and personal assistance readily given by the Church of England, American Lutheran and other Missions, with the happy result that autonomy prospered and the Christian community steadily increased. That co-operation by Christian Missions makes a fine chapter in modern Church history.

A refreshing illustration of the vitality of Indian Christianity lies to hand in the memorable Mission of Fellowship which, in the year 1932, the Churches in India and Burma sent to the Churches in Great Britain and Ireland. The Mission did two notable things: it brought home to the Christians in the West a new sense of the reality of the Church in India, and to the Mission itself it gave a new meaning to the reality of the Church Universal. The Mission had a happy ending in a united Thanksgiving Service in St. Paul’s Cathedral, when the sermon was preached by an Indian Bishop. The time is ripe for another such spiritual embassy from India to Britain, and for a similar embassy from Britain to India. There is a Church in India, and it has come to stay. We are not unmindful of its limitations and weaknesses, due largely to the frail human material of which it is fashioned; but we are mindful that in its heart dwells the living Christ, whose body it is. His presence makes all the difference between a crowd and a Church.

An Indian nation needs an Indian Church. There was a time when the average Indian looked askance at his Christian brother and saw in him a feeble imitation of the European, a prodigal son given to English names, English modes of dress

and English habits of eating and drinking, a camp follower rather than a pioneer, a typical "yes man" ever ready to acquiesce in the *status quo* in respect of both Government and Mission administration. The hardest charge the Christian had to face was that of denationalization. The scene has changed since those days of doubt and derision, and few would now challenge the quality of Christian patriotism. Not only have Christians individually borne an honourable part in political life and identified themselves in the closest way with the national movement: the corporate Christian conscience has spoken in no uncertain manner. When the National Christian Council, a body fully representative of the Protestant Missions and Churches working in India, and under whose constitution at least one-half of the membership must be Indian, met in full session at the end of January 1944, the responsible task was assigned to the Indian members of preparing a statement on the situation in India, as it then stood, that would serve as a guide to action by the Christian forces in Great Britain. The Council, having in its membership nationals of many countries, could not itself make an official pronouncement on a political issue; but the Indian members could, and they did, in the following resolutions:

"(1) Educated Indian Christians fully share the national aspirations of their countrymen. Consequently they also share the sorrow and disappointment aroused by the present political deadness. A terrible sense of resentment and frustration prevails throughout the land.

"(2) The resolving of this deadlock should be the immediate concern of all Christian forces in India and Great Britain. We suggest, therefore, with a full sense of responsibility, the following steps:

(a) The first requisite for a calmer atmosphere is the unconditional release of the interned political leaders, so that they can get together with other leaders to form a national Government. We consider it the duty of the Government to provide all necessary assistance towards this end.



(b) We feel that the Cripps offer should have been modified to meet the demands of Indian political opinion for the immediate formation of a national Government during the period of war, instead of being hastily withdrawn. Nevertheless, in our opinion, the acceptance of the Cripps offer might have been wise.

(c) The declaration of the Cripps proposals in a more acceptable form should be made simultaneously with the release of the leaders. Steps should then be taken to inaugurate in India national and fully representative Governments, at the centre and in the provinces.

(d) A clear and unequivocal declaration should be made that the Atlantic Charter does apply to India, and that the British Government intends to give effect to its provisions.

“(3) Though the problem of minorities is international, we are deeply conscious of the grievous nature of communal differences in Indian life. We are glad to note that your sympathies are whole-heartedly with us in our desire to see a united and free India in which the rights of social, cultural and religious minorities will be secured. These rights, we believe, ought to be mutually guaranteed by the communities and not safeguarded by an external authority. We believe that such guarantees will be forthcoming, when the leaders of all communities work together and share the responsibilities of office.

“(4) It is our earnest prayer that such a lead should come as soon as possible from Great Britain. We, therefore, appeal to the Churches in Great Britain to do all they can to bring about such a change in the political atmosphere. This, we believe, is the ministry of reconciliation which is the clear duty of the Church, to which you in Britain and we in India are called.”

In that deliverance, reinforced by a fuller statement by the All-India Council of Indian Christians, we hear the authentic voice of the Church in India, for the representative character of the group who unanimously adopted it is beyond question. It is a reminder that the Church in India is alive to its responsi-

bility in all matters that affect the national life. Professor Rudra's challenge is being answered. Into all the reaches of national life the influence of the Church carries and brings with it that moral and spiritual replenishment that all the nations need. Moreover, the Christian community has consistently raised its voice against communal representation and thereby given another proof of the reality of its patriotism.

#### HOW THE CHURCH GROWS

(I) While Christians come from all classes, and increase by conversion and natural propagation, it is chiefly from what used to be popularly called the "depressed classes"—now known by the more dignified designation of the "scheduled castes"—and the aboriginal peoples, that the Church draws its adherents, thereby conforming to Scripture precedent—"To the poor the Gospel is preached", and "The common people heard him gladly". It is in these great human provinces that "mass", or rather "group", movements take their rise. A Christian "mass movement" is defined by Bishop J. W. Pickett, whose book, *Christian Mass Movements in India*, is a classic on the subject, in these terms:

"The distinguishing features of Christian mass movements are a group decision favourable to Christianity and the consequent preservation of the converts' social integration. Whenever a group, larger than the family, accustomed to exercise a measure of control over the social and religious life of the individuals that compose it, accepts the Christian religion (or a large proportion accept it with the encouragement of the group), the essential principle of the mass movements is manifest. The size and distribution of the group are of immense interest, but do not affect the principle. A mass movement, which we would prefer to call a group movement, may comprise either a large or a small group."

In his stirring book on *Christian Giving*, the Bishop of Dornakal, India's outstanding Christian leader, makes the

statement that "at least 85 per cent of the total Indian Christian community is the result of large group movements, and for the most part they are drawn, not from the more prosperous sections of Indian Society, but from the peasant and working class only". Estimates vary, but we should not be far out if we put the membership of the scheduled classes at fifty million, and the aborigines, who represent a more robust human type, at twenty million.

(2) The growth of the Church is most marked in rural areas. India is a land of villages. There are some 700,000 of them, and within their bounds are to be found nearly 90 per cent of the population. It is among these thickly sown villages that the good seed of the Kingdom of God finds its most fertile soil. The Indian Church is essentially a rural Church, deriving more than two-thirds of its membership from village sources. It is a matter for congratulation that the Christian enterprise is becoming more and more rurally minded, thereby removing the old reproach that "while 90 per cent of India's people live in villages, 90 per cent of Mission work is city centred". The fact that it is so largely a rural church calls for simplicity in its architecture, intelligent participation in its worship, and good shepherding in its ministry.

(3) The growth of the Church follows natural lines. The Church grows from within. The good news spreads from relative to relative, family to family, tribe to tribe, community to community. Not primarily by the work of the missionary, the pastor, the catechist or paid agent generally, but by the simple witness in life and word of the average Christian, the Gospel lays hold and the Church grows. In India, as elsewhere, the changed life is an effective Christian witness. Still more effective is the witness when the change is reflected in the lives of a community, as this illustration given by the Bishop of Dornakal bears out so eloquently :

"At one place I was to have a confirmation. There were about fifty candidates, who were sitting on the floor. I found some high-caste people sitting upon seats. I did not like this, so went to the head man and asked if they would

withdraw as we were going to have a service. He said they would, but I found afterwards that they only went behind me and watched the whole service.- When it was over the caste people were still waiting, so I spoke to the head man and said I was glad to see them. He replied that these confirmees had practically all been their farm labourers for generations. 'Their parents have been working for my parents for years and years. Who are they? They are not superior to us in caste, they are not superior to us in looks, but as I was standing there and looking at them I felt that the light of the great God came to rest on their faces. There is a glory, there is a joy which we have not got. Now I want you to come and tell my people what Christianity can do for them. If it can do that for these people, surely it can do something for us also.' "

The light of the great God resting on human faces is a Christian sign that cannot be gainsaid.

(4) The growth of the Church coincides with awakening life. New life is stirring throughout India as a whole. Among the scheduled castes it takes the form of revolt against their traditional religion, and a search for a religion that will give them social and economic as well as religious freedom. To them Christianity can only appeal as a religion of power. As recently as January of this year, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the present Minister of Labour in the Viceroy's Council, addressing the All-India Scheduled Castes Conference, made this remarkable declaration: "We must resolve that in the free India of the future we shall be a ruling race. The main cause of the suffering of the scheduled castes, extending over the long period of two thousand years, is Hindu religion. Therefore we must discard Hinduism, and refuse to submit to indignities any longer." To that challenge Christianity as well as Hinduism and Islam must pay serious heed. With the aborigines it is the dawning of a new racial consciousness and a resolve to secure and hold a place in the sun. In Jesus Christ they recognize the strong Deliverer who can bring salvation to them as communities as well as individuals.

Recently in the hills of Assam, where among the aborigines the Church is growing by leaps and bounds, one of their leaders put it in this way: "Jesus Christ is our one and only hope. Pressed in as we are on all sides, He alone can save us and maintain our cause."

(5) In the growth of the Church we see an activity of the Spirit of God. To the charge so freely made that the Church is recruited from those who have little to lose and much to gain; that ignorance and material self-interest rather than conviction and spiritual hunger explain the success of Christian Missions and the rise of the Indian Church, let me quote from the historic statement issued by the National Christian Council in 1937 after a careful review of the "Mass Movement" situation. The Council is a responsible and representative body, not given to hasty judgments, and its view deserves respect. It is put in these words: "These facts furnish convincing evidence that God's Spirit is moving many groups of India's people to seek a fuller life and satisfaction for the hunger of their hearts. Neither the Council nor any section of the Church can fail to be moved by so clear a call to service. The Council are not ignorant of the fact that mixed motives have entered into the movements that are taking place among certain sections of the people. But they are genuinely convinced that there is at the present time genuine religious awakening in the heart of India, and no dangers, however great, in any way diminish the force of the challenge which comes at this hour to the whole Church of Christ." These large accessions make careful instruction before baptism and adequate shepherding after baptism imperative, and it would appear that Church and Missions are fully alive to their responsibility in this important matter. What is most encouraging is the growing acceptance of common standards of instruction and probation. Hasty and indiscriminate baptizing is now largely a thing of the past. It is worthy of note that in the case of the scheduled castes and aborigines, the Christian Message appeals to the community rather than the individual. The explanation would seem to be twofold. (1) The sense of oneness in a community overshadows the sense of individual need and

responsibility: the member of the clan is content to "follow the band". (2) The individual in these communities has not that blinding sense of sin and wrong-doing that gives birth to the cry, what must I do to be saved? Instead of seeing himself as a "miserable offender" against the Divine Law, he sees himself as the victim of adverse circumstances, more offended against than offending. But if the common mind of his group, speaking through an accepted spokesman, declares for Christ and His Gospel, he will add his voice to the great decision. A corporate conversion may be as genuine as an individual one.

We should remember that, while the Church in India is mainly recruited from the less privileged members of society, notable accessions have also come from the higher orders of the Hindu social fabric, as also from the serried ranks of Islam, the exclusive brotherhood of the Sikhs, and the still more exclusive brotherhood of the Parsees. Names, well known beyond these Indian frontiers, spring to mind—Pandita Ramabai, one of the greatest Christian women of all time; Sadhu Sundar Singh, our modern Saint Francis; Narayan Vaman Tilak, the sweet Marathi singer, some of whose hymns, translated from the original, have enriched the hymn-books of the West; the Sorabji family, known all India over and beyond for their varied and devoted service in the Gospel; the well-known Imad-ud-Din, himself a convert from Islam, who could give the names of ninety distinguished converts from the intellectual aristocracy of Muhammadanism—so the list would run on and the remembrance of each name be an occasion of thanksgiving.

The caste Hindu and Moslem convert have played an influential part in the building up of the Church. Many of them came through much tribulation; and if India thinks kindlier of the Christian disciple to-day than it did some fifty years ago, we owe it in no small measure to those who have suffered because of the Name. It is worthy of note that among the splendid group of leaders in the Indian Church to-day are many whose forebears were converts of Carey and Duff and the great missionary pioneers of last century. Occasionally the spirit of caste raises its ugly head; communal

antipathies have a habit of reasserting themselves, and parties and cliques within the courts of the Church are, alas, too familiar manifestations; but these are "foreign bodies" in the Christian fellowship, and the general Christian conscience is set against them. If the average Church Council, making full use of its democratic liberty, has not yet attained to the Psalmist's ideal of "brethren dwelling together in unity", at least it follows after. We shall return to this ideal in a later chapter.

#### THE CHURCH AND ITS TASK

"The Church is Christ's missionary to the world" was the central message of the historic Tambaram Conference, and it would appear that the Church in India is alive to this *supreme Christian task*. In all its plans evangelism is primary and paramount. But the Church is weak, economically, educationally and spiritually, and needs to be reinforced in all these three indispensable respects. Rich in faith, the Church is poor in this world's goods. £10 would be a generous estimate of the annual income of the average Christian family. The bulk of its members are landless labourers, and those who are fortunate enough to possess land have usually to be content with what in Scotland would be called a "small holding"—a matter of three to ten acres; the return from the land is uncertain, for the Indian farmer has weather vagaries to contend with unknown to his agricultural brother in the West, and there is usually a money-lender waiting expectant in the background; the artisan earns good wages, but the rising cost of living leaves little for the Church collection; few Christians have so far gone in for business, but the professions and public services—government, local authorities, railways—have claimed a goodly number; others have prospered as lawyers, doctors and teachers, and the war has opened the gates of lucrative employment to many ambitious young men. But the grim fact remains that the Church is poor economically, and if the ideal of self-support is to be realized, a more serious endeavour than is now in evidence must be made to improve

its economic position. Christian rural reconstruction is a task that cannot wait.

- Educationally the Church is weak. Happily, the standard is rising, but the latest available figures give the melancholy impression that 75 per cent of the total Christian population are still unable to read. That reproach must be removed, for the empty book-shelf is as pathetic as the empty cupboard. It is not enough that this percentage is a substantial improvement on the all-India figure of 85 per cent; the Christian forces in India must not cease from mental strife till the great goal of a Bible-reading Church is attained. It is cheering to know that a network of Adult Literacy Committees, drawing inspiration and guidance from the "Laubach method" so successfully employed in the Philippines, together with other hopeful methods indigenous to India, and working in unison with the Central Adult Literacy Committee of the National Christian Council, is functioning to good purpose. The great need is for enthusiastic and persevering teachers, both paid and voluntary. The slogan of Dr. Laubach, "India shall be literate", has the blessing and active support of the Church.

We have mentioned that the Church is rich in faith, but if that faith is to be richly enjoyed, and richly employed in Christian service, it must be constantly illumined and replenished. The Church owes that duty to itself. Moreover, it is recognized, both within and without Christian circles, that the immediate need of the Church, to enable it to fulfil its God-given task of evangelism, is the deepening and reinforcing of its spiritual life. To this end the provision of an adequate ministry, ordained and lay, is an imperative necessity. No subject in recent years has exercised Christian minds in India so much as this, and it is satisfactory to learn from the latest proceedings of the National Christian Council that, after much surveying, plans for a comprehensive and generally acceptable scheme of theological education are now well advanced, and we may indulge the hope that the Church in India, in all its branches, will before long have the ministry it deserves. We mark with satisfaction the change of emphasis from the ministry the Church can support to the ministry it



deserves, and the growing acceptance of the central maintenance of the Ministry Fund principle.

It has been customary to state the objective of Christian Missions in terms of a self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating indigenous Church. The objective remains, but the order should read self-propagating, self-governing and self-supporting. It is now recognized that the duty of self-support should be understood in terms of the Christian law of mutual aid, "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ." The strong Churches are called to bear the burdens of the weak, and all the Churches, strong and weak, are reminded that they are part of the Church Universal with a definite stake in the cause of world evangelism.

If the Church has still far to go in the direction of self-government and self-support, it has travelled far in the direction of self-propagation or self-extension. Recent years have witnessed a real advance in self-government within the courts of the Church, a realm in which it had hitherto shown a reluctance, due in no small measure to the presence of a capable missionary ecclesiastic in the offing, to develop initiative and administrative control. Overmastering circumstances, including not only two world wars, but a new sense of the nature and function of the Church, and also a certain diminution of missionary resources in men and money, are constraining the Church in India to accept larger responsibilities in self-government. In this connection these wise words from Professor Latourette, writing in a recent issue of the *International Review of Missions*, are to the point. "What does seem to be uniform in the experience of transplanting Christianity and enabling it to take firm rootage is the achievement of an indigenous leadership and a maximum of self-government. If Christianity is to become indigenous among any people, it is to the evoking and training of the leadership and the encouragement of this self-government that Mission policy is most wisely directed." In this realm of administration the ordained minister must be the key-man, and this consideration gives to the theological education and preparation an added importance.

It is significant that the Church in India is alive to the place women can hold in its service and offices. We may even hope that in some no distant future they may be welcomed to the ranks of the regular ministry and given the right of the pulpit. As an earnest of things to come, the United Church of Northern India already admits them to the eldership. This, one can say without reserve, that in the general life of the Church, particularly in the building up of the Christian home, and in the carrying forward of its plans for evangelism, women are taking an indispensable part.

The Church in India gives itself to the task of evangelism with a zest the Churches in the West might well emulate. "Every Christian a witness" is its rallying cry, and in the "Week of Witness", which is a marked feature of the Forward Movement in Evangelism, the duty is laid on every Christian to do something. What a story could be told of illiterate disciples who give themselves to the distribution and sale of the Christian Scriptures and Christian literature; of groups who form themselves into singing bands; of others who visit the homes in their neighbourhood, Christian and non-Christian alike, and are often the means of bringing back to the Christian fellowship those whose love has grown cold and whose church attendance has ceased. The important thing is that evangelism is not left to the select company of paid workers: it is proclaimed and largely accepted as the business of the congregation as a whole.

A splendid example of indigenous initiative and zest for evangelism is seen in the work of the National Missionary Society. Founded in 1905, it follows truly indigenous lines of action, relying on Indian personnel, Indian methods and Indian money. It does not enter into competition with denominational missionary efforts, but serves as the handmaid of all the Churches. It carries on its work in fifty centres, distributed among eight provinces and ten language areas.

Will the Church be among the things that will remain after the war? It is challenged from many quarters, for there are many claimants to the spiritual allegiance of India. Many see real danger in the oncoming of secularism, but powerful as

that onset is, we cannot think it is a permanent mood of the Indian spirit. A resurgent and purified Hinduism, with its ban on proselytizing, is a more formidable rival. Islam, confident and aggressive, will struggle hard to maintain and increase its brotherhood. Following the war is likely to come a state of disruption, wherein the whole religious, political, economic and social fabric of the State will be shaken to its foundations. Will the Church weather the storm? There are enemies within the gates—the spirit of faction and the more subtle danger of inertia due largely to the presence of a diffused element of nominal Christianity to whom the “new birth” is an unfamiliar experience. It may be the Church will be called to contend for the Faith and fight again the old battle for religious liberty. If that challenge comes the Church will not fail. It is not for nothing that this ancient people of India has weathered the storms of many centuries and is to-day vibrating with newness of life; it is no accident that by virtue of her religious heritage India is able to withstand the onset of secularism better than most countries; neither is it simply an interesting study in statistics that the Christian Church in India is increasing rapidly and winning its way among all classes of people: can we not see in all this the moving of the finger of God, fashioning out of India’s peoples a spiritual nation in whom all nations of the earth shall yet be blessed? The City of God remaineth.

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## THE MISSIONARY AND HIS FUTURE IN THE INDIAN SCENE

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THERE is a reliable tradition that an Indian schoolboy, asked by his teacher to make an inventory of British exports to India, promptly put "missionaries" at the head of his list. These exports come not only from Britain, they come from all the Christian lands, and represent every segment of the Church Universal, with the possible exception of the Greek and Coptic Churches. As late as 1938 it appears that 5,417 Protestant missionaries, of whom, including wives, 3,472 were women, were then at work in India. The exigencies of war and other factors have reduced that number by at least one-third. A reference to the Directory of Christian Missions and Churches of the National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon reveals the amazing fact that more than a hundred missionary organizations of various kinds and various resources are in action in India. Their infinite variety of aim is reflected in such designations as the "Mission to the Aristocracy of India", the "British in India Mission", the "Old Church Hebrew Mission," the "Free Gospel Mission" and the "Full Gospel Mission". Naturally, the great Christian denominations have been the pioneers and main support of the missionary enterprise, and it is largely through their ministry that the Church in India has reached its present dimensions; but following in their train has come an increasing number of inter-denominational and undenominational societies, with the promise of more to follow. While we may regret the multiplicity of these missionary endeavours, we may also rejoice that in these various ways Christ is proclaimed and, at the same time, seek to bring them all into closer co-operation. Largely for this cause the National Christian Council of India came into being, and to

this end it serves with an encouraging measure of success.

The missionary enterprise in its manifold manifestations is probably the largest non-official co-operative concern in India. The missionary himself is a familiar figure: in town and village he is to be found, not now sheltering under an ancient umbrella and wearing the sombre black of the story books, but sensibly clothed, not infrequently in shirt and shorts, giving himself as his Master did, to teaching, preaching and healing, the friend and helper of all. In varying degrees he falls in with Indian ways; eats Indian food with disciplined enthusiasm; wears Indian dress when occasion requires; speaks the language of the country-side; makes himself acquainted with the religious and cultural heritage of his adopted country, and generally proves himself a useful member of society. More than all that, he maintains touch with the unseen, and speaks to a people, religious by nature and heredity, the words of eternal life. How far he thinks the thoughts of India and shares the aspirations of its citizens is a question that lies beyond our Western ken. But this is clear: without the mission hospital, the mission school and college, the mission leper hospital, the mission rural reconstruction centre, and the many gracious influences that take their rise in the Gospel of Christ and are radiated from a network of mission stations, this crowded land, where poverty of body and soul is the lot of the greater number of its people, would be poorer still. It is a matter of deep concern that because of abnormal conditions these mission centres are, almost without exception, seriously understaffed to-day.

Since the Church in India is now the torch-bearer of evangelism, the question naturally arises, Where does the missionary come in? Is there a place for him in the India of to-day? and Will there be a place for him in the India of to-morrow? There are some Christians in India who say quite frankly that the day of the foreign missionary is over, and that the best thing he can do is to fold up his tent and depart gracefully, leaving the field to his indigenous brother. They who say this have in mind these things: the Church is now domiciled in India and able to take up the varied tasks hitherto handled by the

missionary; qualified Indian teachers, preachers and doctors are now available; the presence of the missionary, having regard to his prestige and financial potency, hinders the growth of indigenous initiative and leadership. While these questions give us pause, they need not give us alarm. Three considerations have to be borne in mind: the transition from Mission to Church is still far from complete; the Christian task in India is an ecumenical as well as a regional concern; the questions raised affect all the mission fields and are at present engaging the best minds in the older and younger Churches. But to return. The view that the day of the missionary is over, or even running to an early close, is not the view of the general body of Christians in India. These hold that the missionary is needed and wanted for three compelling reasons: the indigenous Church needs him for the upbuilding of its spiritual life and the strengthening of its outward witness; the unfinished evangelistic task needs him—in a population of three hundred and ninety million, Christians of all communions number barely seven and a half million, approximately one Christian to fifty non-Christians, and there are still large areas where no effective Christian witness is given; the Church Universal needs him in India in the interests of world evangelization. He will no longer be a lone pioneer, fighting his way through the trackless forest and reducing to writing the language of the people he meets on the way; but he will still be a pioneer, pressing forward in fellowship with his Indian Christian brethren to greater reaches of spiritual achievement and evangelistic endeavour. From these premises two conclusions of far-reaching range can be drawn. India is still, and likely to remain for many a decade, a field for missionary service: it is also a base for extended evangelistic operations in other lands. There is a deep conviction within the Church in India that the missionary link between East and West should be maintained and mutually extended. But it must be on the basis and in the spirit of an equal partnership. What is written above and later in these pages applies equally to men and women missionaries.

## THE NON-CHRISTIAN VIEW

How does non-Christian India view the presence and work of the Christian missionary? Since he comes to displace the ancient religions and replace them by a new and seemingly Western faith, he can hardly expect to be received with enthusiasm. At any rate, the new faith must be tested by its fruits, and sufficient time passed for opinion to develop. Hinduism, the most widely held and most tolerant of the religions of India, would certainly give a majority vote in favour of the missionary continuing his work, provided—and it is a grim provision—he confined his activities to social service and did not press for conversion and consequent reception into the organized Christian fellowship. Some years ago Mr. Gandhi propounded the “fragrance of the rose” view, which called upon the missionary to cease from preaching and let his message rest on the silent witness of his life and service. To the Mahatma, the Scripture would read, “Faith cometh by smelling and not by hearing.” But not so has the missionary learned Christ. Necessity is laid upon him to summon men everywhere to hear and obey the Gospel. He is committed to the ministry of evangelism as defined by the Tambaram Conference in the now familiar terms: “By evangelism we understand that the Church Universal, in all its branches and through the service of all its members, must so present Jesus Christ to the world in the power of the Holy Spirit that men shall come to put their trust in God through Him, accept Him as their Saviour, and serve Him as their Lord in the fellowship of His Church.” The missionary, then, be he preacher, teacher, doctor, or social worker, who proclaims the Christian message and thereby attracts adherents from other religions to the Christian fold, lays himself open to the charge of proselytizing. It is an ugly charge, for it carries an implication of fishing in troubled waters and a breach of religious courtesy. Time has not dealt kindly with the term proselyte. What was originally an honourable designation for a person who voluntarily crossed over from one religion to another, now suggests unworthy

motives on the one hand and unfair methods on the other. The charge is that he, who in these days makes such a religious crossing, does so either from ignorance or for the sake of material gain, and that he who engineers the crossing does so by playing on these human strings. The charge is usually levelled against those who are engaged in what is called "mass movement" work and its beneficiaries; but it extends to other ranges of Christian activity also. Behind the hostility to proselytizing, or making converts, lie three conceptions peculiar to Hinduism. (1) In Hindu thought God is unknowable; all religions are therefore human speculations, and one religion is as good as another. (2) Hinduism meets all our requirements; it is foolish and unpatriotic to exchange it for another religion. So the cry is raised, "It is a sin to change our religion." (3) Under the prevailing political system of communal representation on public bodies, the conversion of a Hindu to the Christian religion means a vote less to the Hindu community and a vote more to the Christian community.

In this matter of proselytizing, Muhammadanism, being a propagandist religion, stands in the same category as Christianity; and therein, incidentally, lies one safeguard for the maintenance of religious liberty, for the Moslem will contend as zealously for the right to propagate his faith as will the Christian. The missionary, while paying due respect to the integrity of other religions, will stand for the right of individuals, or groups of individuals, to change their faith if they sincerely wish to do so. While the charge of undue influence may still be made, it is unlikely that the fundamental right to change one's religion will be seriously challenged in the India of to-morrow. Whether it is written in the Constitution or not, the steady trend of Indian politics towards democratic ideals; the presence of virile minority religions, each claiming the right to practise and propagate the faith it holds; and the spirit of tolerance inherent in the predominant Hindu religion, will combine to make India reasonably safe for religious liberty. In any case, the path of the missionary is plain. In company with the great Augustine he can say, "What I live by, that I impart." He has received good news



that has entered into the very fibre of his being, and he must tell it out. By its nature and the sanction of its Founder, Christianity is a proselytizing religion; but these same considerations demand that the methods employed in giving effect to this law of its being must be above suspicion. To the charge that material gain is the bait held out by zealous evangelists to increase the Christian census figures, it cannot be too strongly stated that the universal Christian conscience condemns any such practice. Nor should it be forgotten that, instead of loaves and fishes, what meets the convert is more often persecution, social ostracism and the loss of all material things. To the Christian, conversion is an act of God, and no human contriving can bring it about. The missionary, therefore, will stand by two inflexible principles, the integrity of his message and the prerogative of personal choice. In this regard, it is imperative that he be well grounded in the faith he proclaims, and well informed in the faiths that claim the allegiance of others. He will see to it also that his methods are open to the sunlight. That one religion is as good as another, and all religions spring from a common root of speculation, is a popular fancy, begotten of the underlying scepticism of Hindu thought that only an authentic word from heaven can dispel. To speak that word is the privilege of the missionary. The charge of proselytizing is a challenge to the best furnished minds in the Christian Church.

In Muhammadanism Christianity meets a formidable but not necessarily an unfriendly rival as things are in India to-day. How does the Moslem view the missionary invasion? Like the Christian he is a propagandist, and the charge of proselytizing applies equally to both. He will strongly oppose the Christian claim that Jesus is the Son of God; but he will not deny the right of the evangelist to make it. Were India a predominantly Moslem country it might be otherwise; but since the Indian scene offers no immediate prospect of that coming about, the Moslem preacher and the Christian evangelist can agree on a mutual truce and go their preaching ways, even to the extent of trying to convert each other. It is to be noted that while notable converts have come from Islam, they have been

few as compared with the accessions from Hinduism. This gives added importance to the work of that excellent co-operative missionary venture, the Henry Martyn School of Islamics, with its base in North India, at Aligarh, which is also the home of a Moslem university. The school, through its research work, and the part it is taking in instructing missionaries and others more fully in the doctrines and practices of Islam, is doing much to fashion an acceptable Christian approach to the adherents of this virile faith.

There is one important community that will welcome the missionary and beg him to stay, and that is the people once popularly referred to as the "depressed classes", but now known by the more dignified designation of the "scheduled castes". They number roughly fifty million, and by virtue of a provision in the Government of India Act they are classed as statutory Hindus; but there are indications that they are no longer prepared to shelter under that classification. They have declared plainly that they seek a better spiritual climate, and it is the privilege of the missionary to show them the way. The scheduled castes have a powerful leader in Dr. B. H. Ambedkar, who has risen by sheer merit to the important office of Minister of Labour in the Viceroy's Council. It is from this same community that the Church in India has been largely recruited.

#### FUTURE CONTINGENCIES

Looking at the Indian scene as a whole, we conclude that the working day of the missionary from abroad has still many hours to run, and that many works of noble note await his coming. That is the question viewed on the human plane: we must not forget that the final discharge of the missionary can only be given by Him who commissioned and sent him. It is sometimes averred that the British connection has been a hindrance to missionary work in India, but the evidence is to the contrary. The principle of religious neutrality has been scrupulously observed by Government officers, and the work of the British missionary has been as fruitful as that of his brother and sister

from the United States and the continent of Europe. Moreover, the success of the Christian movement in India compares favourably with that achieved in China, where neither Hindu caste nor British connection pertain.

Nevertheless, turning to the other side of the shield, complete independence is likely to interpose difficulties in the path of Christian progress. But it is my firm belief that it is not likely to affect fundamentally the essential function of the missionary. In this respect it is relevant to remind readers that some of the Gospel's greatest triumphs in India have been won in independent Indian States. While he stands aloof, as far as he humanly can, from party politics, the missionary has been able to convey the impression that he is neither hostile nor indifferent to national aspirations. It is worthy of note that the orgy of violence that followed the internment of the Congress leaders in August 1942 did not seriously endanger missionary lives or mission property. The revolution was aimed at the Government fabric and not the missionary scheme of things. Political India is not necessarily anti-missionary; but the trend of events suggests certain contingencies that may arise. The range of missionary activity may be restricted in three directions—the imparting of Christian instruction in Government aided and recognized mission schools and colleges; a reduction in Government grants to mission institutions; the likelihood that evidence of conversion satisfactory to a Court of Law may be required before baptism.

Notwithstanding Hindu respect for tolerance and Moslem regard for brotherhood, an endeavour may be made to bring all religious activities within the purview, if not the control of the State. If the State be predominantly Hindu, or predominantly Moslem, or as some fear, predominantly secular, the missionary may be called to fight beside his Indian Christian brethren the old fight for religious liberty and the right not only to hold but to propagate the Christian faith. The Church in India is fully alive to that contingency.

Granted that there is, and will be for many days to come, a place for the foreign missionary in India, there is a feeling that he need not come in such numbers as formerly. Fewer and

more carefully picked ambassadors is now the plea. Mission boards in the West are entitled to ask the Churches in India to say explicitly how many, and for what purposes missionaries are needed and wanted. The answer will not be the final word on the subject, for in such an issue the word of the Holy Spirit is decisive; but the advice given will be a guide to action. It is gratifying to know that this important question is under consideration by those who determine policies in the older and younger Churches.

It is generally agreed that the missionary who has some special gift to offer, whether of scholarship, technical skill, or practical experience in some particular branch of Christian service, will find a hospitable climate in India. In particular, Christian and non-Christian India alike will welcome the Christian scholar to whom theology is the breath of life and Church history a familiar pilgrim way. He will be all the more acceptable if he be humble enough to study the structure and message of the ancient religions, and able enough to present the Christian message with knowledge and conviction to enquiring and critical minds. India stands to-day in need of the skilled Christian advocate, and will hearken to such when he comes in the spirit of his Master. We have not yet out-thought the Hindu, nor have we excelled the Moslem in brotherhood. But having said that, my preference is for the Christian all-rounder, the man or woman of more than one talent who will render the greatest service to the greatest number. Great as is the need for the specialist, and India needs more of him, the need for the friend and brother is still greater. As I see it, the missionary of the future will find his or her vocation in one or other, or all of these spheres, the Church, the Nation, the Gospel.

#### THE MISSIONARY AND THE CHURCH

The Church will welcome the missionary to help it to fulfil its God-given task of evangelism, and the missionary will need the Church to enable him to make full proof of his ministry. It is therefore desirable that he integrate himself and his ser-

vice as early as he can in the life and purposes of the indigenous Church. There are some whose judgment I respect who think the missionary can help the Church best by remaining outside; but that is a view I cannot share. The Church in India is the Church Universal planted in India, and it seems to me right and proper that the missionary should make it his spiritual home, sharing its membership and accepting its discipline. At first he may find much to repel—local jealousies, rivalries, wranglings and low levels of Christian conduct—but remembering the pit from which these believers have been dug as compared with his own favoured background, he will refrain from hasty judgment and set himself to be an ensample to the flock. There are many ways in which he can strengthen the Church's life and witness.

(1) He can help to provide it with a more adequate Christian ministry, ordained and lay. In this regard his own rich preparation, and the skill he has acquired in imparting what he himself has learned, will be a great asset. I know no worthier service. Théological education has been the weak link in the missionary scheme, and it is comforting to know that a resolute effort is now being made by the Christian forces as a whole to strengthen the chain. Apart from the regular work of the theological seminary, the missionary teacher can do much by helping to organize retreats for pastors—a greatly needed ministry—courses of Bible study for workers, both men and women, camps for students, study circles and discussion groups. The all-important thing is that he have time as well as ability for such service. The average missionary is overburdened and needs more leisure for work of this kind.

(2) In the production, publication and distribution of Christian literature, the missionary can serve the Church to good purpose. He should therefore be a lover of books. Since the Church is still to a large extent illiterate, the missionary will naturally bend his energies to the promotion of adult literacy—one of the most promising movements of the times—where the need of informed and patient teachers is acute. An equally acute need, that the missionary can help to meet, is a supply of

suitable graded literature for those who are beginning the great adventure of letters. The Church is adopting as its slogan, "A Bible-reading Church"; and if that noble objective is to be reached, a combined effort on the part of all the Christian forces in India, such as the National Christian Council is promoting, is called for. Further, for those who can read, the Church needs a richer supply of books of a devotional character, helps to Bible study, literature designed to nurture a healthy Christian home life, books for the young, books on Christian ethics and books that will stimulate deeper study of the central doctrines of the Christian faith. In this wide field of service the missionary will not be called to plough a lonely furrow: it will be his privilege to work with Indian colleagues and encourage indigenous authorship.

(3) There is a clear call to the missionary to help on the cause of Church union. In the impressive statement drawn up by delegates of the younger Churches who were present at the historic World Missionary Conference of 1938 that was held at Tambaram, near Madras, this passage occurs: "Visible and organic union must be our goal. We therefore appeal with all the fervour we possess to missionary societies and boards, and the responsible authorities of the older Churches, to take this matter seriously to heart, to labour with the Churches in the mission field to put an end to the scandalous effect of our divisions, and to lead us in the path of union." In view of that call, it is difficult to see how the missionary can stand aside. There are already autonomous denominational Churches in India, such as the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, representing the Anglican communion; the Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church of Chota Nagpur and Assam; the Mar Thoma Syrian Church; the Orthodox Syrian Church; and the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church. There are also organized Church bodies associated with the great denominations; but it is only in the case of the South India United Church and the United Church of Northern India that we have examples of interdenominational Church union. In these two united Churches Congregationalists, Presbyterians and other members of the Reformed Churches

share a common church life. Included are congregations that have come into being as the result of missionary work carried on by Churches and Missions with headquarters in the United States, Great Britain and Ireland, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Switzerland. It is from these two united Churches that the movement for further union takes its present direction. Negotiations are already well advanced for union between the South India United Church on the one hand, and the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, through its four southern dioceses, and the Methodist Church of Great Britain and Ireland on the other. The proposed union is unique in this that it is an endeavour to combine episcopal, congregational and presbyterial church politics in one organized fellowship. If it succeeds, as I think it must, having regard to the difficulties already overcome and the steadfast faith of those at the centre, it will be an incentive and guide to union movements in other parts of the world. But there are still serious hazards to be overcome, and the need of informed and constant prayer is as great as ever.

In North India two approaches are being made, known respectively as the Joint Council Plan, which has in view union between the United Church of Northern India on the one hand, and the Methodist Church of South Asia (formerly known as the American Methodist Episcopal Church), the Congregational Churches in Bengal and the Churches associated with the Baptist Missionary Society on the other hand; and the Round Table Conversations which aim at bringing in the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon and the Methodist Church of Great Britain. Progress is necessarily slow, and in particular the education of the average church member, so highly important, is proving a difficult process. The missionary with his knowledge of Church history, his experience of union movements in his own country and his well-developed church sense, can do much "to lead the younger Churches in the path of union". It is to be regretted that some of the larger Christian Communions like the Lutherans, Syrians and American Baptists stand aside from the present union movements. But they are not indifferent to the cause of unity,

and they co-operate cordially in the work of the national and provincial Christian Councils.

(4) The missionary is called to relate his ministry of education more directly to the needs of the Christian community. I view with misgiving the lessening hold of Christian Missions on elementary and secondary education. If the Church throughout the wide reaches of its membership is to commend Christianity as a way of life, and the Christian home is to exemplify the nobility and felicity of domestic life, it is essential that children of Christian parents receive a sound elementary and secondary education under Christian auspices. The incoming of backward races into the Christian fellowship lends emphasis to that plea. The Christian college has played a great part in developing Christian leadership, and as it concentrates more and more on the nurture of the Christian student within its walls it will win still further the confidence and gratitude of all sections of the Christian Church. The Christian college also provides a noble opportunity for fellowship in service between teachers of East and West.

(5) The missionary will help to maintain the spirit of evangelism in the Church. There is danger lest the local congregation develop an attitude of complacency and be content to balance its budget, without much thought for the things of others. By identifying himself to the fullest extent with the Church and its mission, the missionary, always a pioneer, can lead it out into ever extending reaches of evangelism. This is not "missionary imperialism": this is partnership in the truest, happiest sense. Finally, in serving the Church local, the missionary serves the Church universal and thus takes his share in the supreme Christian cause of world evangelization. For these and other reasons I have not space to mention, the Church in India extends its invitation to the missionary to come over and work with it in the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ.

#### THE MISSIONARY AND THE NATION

Mindful of her duty to India, Great Britain has given to the governance of the country an efficient Civil Service, and



her sons have laboured and died that India might live peaceably and rise to the full stature of a sovereign state. The missionary will therefore remember that he is not the only servant of India. He will remember also that less familiar story of soldiers, engineers, planters, business men and other ranks who have served India well and borne a Christian witness in their day. Time and again I have lighted on Christian institutions and philanthropic enterprises that owe their origin and, in many cases their maintenance, to British men and women in all ranks of society who had learned to interpret the Christian faith in terms of duty and service. There is another side to the shield, usually associated with bad manners and racial arrogance, but the missionary will remember the debt he and the people of India owe to the former class. While the Indian scene is ever changing, providing the missionary with something in the nature of a moving target, it may be said that all the great fields of service are open to him. Education in all its stages from the village school to the university beckons to him. The mission school and college have exercised a deep and wholesome influence on the thought, life and progress of India, and were that influence removed the country as a whole would regret it. Vast schemes for educational reconstruction are being planned, and it is incumbent on Christian Missions to see to it that the secular conception of education does not obtain the complete mastery. The day of the missionary teacher has still some of its finest hours to run.

Allied to education is that other outreach of influential missionary endeavour, the ministry of Christian literature. We have already considered this in connection with the Church, but there remains our Christian duty to the nation. This is accentuated by the rapidly growing reading population. Already literature of an undesirable character is circulating freely both in English and the languages of the country, and there is a crying need for a corrective in the form of readable Christian literature. Apart from that, India with its cultural traditions deserves the best that Christian minds can give. It is possible that the range of public proclamation of the Gospel may be restricted, but the highway of Christian

literature will remain open. If the missionary who can write books, and, still better, can inspire his Indian brethren to write books, be needed, equally needed will be the missionary colporteur. One cannot but mark with regret the passing of the old-time missionary bookseller and tract distributor from the Indian roads and bazaars. Time was when Christian literature was looked upon as the Cinderella of the missionary enterprise: the time is propitious to make her a princess.

In the sphere of medical work there can be no dubiety. Need and desire alike invite the medical missionary to India. With all its resources, spiritual, mental, and material, India is a land where disease and suffering—much of it preventable—abound, and its citizens will breathe a blessing on all, from whatever land they come, who will devote their lives to the “ministry of health and healing”. The last missionary to leave these Indian shores, should there ever be a last missionary to leave, will almost certainly be a medical missionary!

The peasant is still India's indispensable and most numerous man. To help him rebuild his broken fortunes and rise to a better quality of rural living is a task that awaits the missionary who has farming blood in him and would fain turn the countryside into a “colony of heaven”. More and more the windows of the average mission station look out on the village, and more and more the great term “rural reconstruction” invades the missionary conference hall. It would be well if, before he comes to India, the missionary who contemplates work in rural India could have some practical training in this kind of human engineering. What is needed is knowledge and the ability to impart it, patience, a respect for personality, and time to concentrate on the work in hand. But the peasant is moving to the factory, for India's industrial age has come to stay; and this opens another compelling door of service. If in the West the factory worker needs a chaplain, even more so does his comrade in the East need a guide, counsellor and friend. Is a Christian labour movement in India only a sentimental dream? A thorough mastery of the Beveridge Report on the part of the industrially minded missionary might give substance to the dream!

Having disclosed his calling in the friendly atmosphere of a crowded railway compartment in India recently, a missionary was met with the exclamation, "You are a missionary, then you are our friend." That is the root of the matter. India stands to-day in sore need of friendship. Into the changing, troubled Indian scene the missionary comes with the great Christian message of reconciliation, and if he can but reflect that message in his dealings with the people, he will surely advance the cause of unity and concord. Since he knows the secret of the reconciled heart, the missionary can build bridges of mutual understanding and goodwill between divided communities, and between estranged individuals. He can also in some measure interpret the West to the East and the East to the West, and thus promote the cause of international friendship.

#### THE MISSIONARY AND THE GOSPEL

It is well to read the signs of the times; to mark the varying attitude to the missionary and his work; to watch the rising tide of nationalism and the larger tide of internationalism; to rejoice in the growth and influence of the indigenous Church; to note the varying situations into which the missionary can deploy his services; but while these things have a direct bearing on the place and function of the missionary in the Indian scene, and while they call for redirection in his methods of work, they cannot deflect him from the integrity of his calling. He is "a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God". What is the Gospel of God? "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." The missionary, then, is Christ's ambassador, commissioned to beseech men to be reconciled to God. He faces what Tambaram called "The Unfinished Evangelistic Task", and he knows that while the Gospel has been widely proclaimed in India, there are still areas where the name of Christ has no meaning. He knows also that of India's teeming millions three hundred

and eighty million worship at other than Christian altars. These are Christ's "other sheep", and he will remember that Christ said, "Them also I must bring." That divine "must" is the missionary's charter. In a family of loyalties—loyalty to his country and family, loyalty to India whose citizen he is, loyalty to the Church that sent him, loyalty to the Church that received him, and loyalty to the Church Universal whose agent he is—his first and final loyalty is to the Lord Jesus Christ from whom he derives his salvation and his commission.

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## THE MINISTRY OF CHRISTIAN MEDICINE

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ONE of God's good gifts to India is the Christian doctor. Whether engaged in medical missionary work, in Government service, or in private practice, the doctor, man or woman, plays an indispensable and greatly appreciated part not only in the prevention and alleviation of human suffering, but also in the building up of healthier and happier standards of living. What Christian Medicine has done, is doing, and hopes to do in India, that fascinating book, *Tales from the Inns of Healing*—recently published by the Christian Medical Association of India—tells in language that bears the imprint of veracity and simplicity. In helping to heal the open sores of humanity, and particularly in India, where malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy, influenza, plague and malnutrition take heavy toll of human life, the doctor and nurse who have sat at the feet of the Great Physician and learned of Him, are rendering service of the finest and most enduring quality. There is gladness and responsibility in the remembrance that in the general medical service of India one-eighth of the total effort is borne by Christian Missions.

Even statistics, when they relate to the work of medical missions, can be moving, as one pictures the human lives behind the figures. Here are a few figures of Christian medical work for the year 1942:

HOSPITALS, CENTRAL AND BRANCH	290 (with 15,970 beds)
DISPENSARIES AND OUT-PATIENT DEPARTMENTS	661
SANATORIA FOR TUBERCULOSIS (One-third of the beds available for tuberculosis patients are in Christian institutions)	10 (with 979 beds)

## LEPER HOMES AND HOSPITALS

62 (accommodating  
11,044 patients)(In ministering to the leper,  
Christian Missions have almost  
a monopoly)

## IN-PATIENTS TREATED

284,772

## OUT-PATIENTS TREATED

6,664,444

## OPERATIONS

218,395 (major 32,897)

## INCOME

Received in India, from fees, donations and  
grants in aid, approximately

£328,450

Received from abroad, approximately

£173,050

(This is an underestimate, because salaries of  
missionaries were not included and a number  
of institutions did not report)

## STAFF

## FOREIGN

Doctors: Men 120, Women 148 268

Nurses 308

Qualified Pharmacists 13

Qualified Technicians 10

## NATIONAL

Doctors: Men 246, Women 199 445

Nurses: Men 231, Women 807 1,038

Midwives 208

Qualified Dispensers 430

Qualified Technicians 127

A very important branch of Christian Medicine is the training of medical students, nurses, dispensers, midwives and technicians. So we give this further table:

## TRAINING CLASSES

Medical students: Men 102, Women 203 305

Post-graduate students in Tuberculosis 14

Nurses: Men 308, Women 1,656 1,964

Dispensers: Men 73, Women 78 151

Midwives 383

Technicians 41

There was a time, not far back, when it could be said that

90 per cent of the nurses in India were Christians, and 80 per cent were trained in mission hospitals. The scene is changing now, and Indian women of all classes are coming forward to take up this needed and noble service.

The question of Medical Education is fundamental to the working out of a scheme that will give India the adequate medical and health service she so sorely needs. It occupies the serious attention of Government, and holds a central place in the thinking and planning of the Christian Medical Association of India, as the following retrospect will show.

#### CHRISTIAN DOCTORS IN CONSULTATION

The scene was the city of Poona, a notable centre of Indian culture, and the year 1929. The executive committee of the Christian Medical Association was in session, and I chanced to be the only layman present. These doctors had come from the far north and the extreme south, from farthest east and farthest west, to talk over the common problems and sketch the shape of things to come. A "magnificent obsession" held them: they were fired with a common resolve to rise and build a Christian medical college, open to men and women, in keeping with the high standards of Christian medicine and worthy to match a great and urgent need. They had marked as they went their rounds that the old order was changing; that the days of the medical school and the lower grade of training were numbered; that Indian doctors of the highest possible qualifications, medical, mental, and spiritual, would be needed in increasing numbers; that splendid as are the facilities for training offered in Government institutions they could not give that endowment of the Christian spirit that a Christian medical college could, nor could they guarantee places for a sufficiency of Christian students; they saw their own busy working day running to its close, and they looked round for willing and qualified Indian hands to which they could entrust their torch: so they dreamed of their college, and pondered where and how they would build it.

Christian Missions had already pioneered in medical training,

and as a result three Christian medical schools in India, two for women, one at Vellore in the south and another at Ludhiana in the north, and one for men in the Native State of Miraj in Western India, had come into being. Graduates from these schools to the number of a thousand are to be found in many parts of India, and life is all the sweeter that they are there. These centres of medical learning are associated with honoured missionary names that India will ever hold in grateful remembrance. But the Christian medical school is not enough: the times demand a college. In India, as elsewhere, the standards in all the great human provinces are rising and the call comes for Christian doctors of the highest qualifications. It was to consider this call that the executive of the Christian Medical Association met in Poona for consultation. The doctors had no illusions as to the immensity of the task that confronted them. To raise a medical school to the rank of a college, or create an entirely new institution, meant an expenditure of something approaching a quarter of a million pounds, and the searching of India through to find the staff required. Responsible authorities in Church and Mission, themselves beset with existing financial commitments, gasped when the colossal dimensions of this new scheme burst upon them, and they saw no smiling millionaire at hand to help them. But the doctors did not hesitate. The vision splendid of a Union Christian Medical College grew in splendour. Their conviction found expression in this notable affirmation of the Christian Medical Association:

“We state emphatically that we regard Christian Higher Medical Education as the most urgent and important project for medical missions in India, so important that if it cannot be attained otherwise, some of the medical work in India should be sacrificed even though the loss would be great.”

When doctors reach a decision of this kind something is likely to happen, and things are already happening.

Certain preliminary decisions had to be taken before the ambitious scheme could go forward. It was agreed that the



one institution of the higher grade should be attempted; that it should be of a co-operative character; and that it should rest on an existing foundation. Vellore, in South India, where the existence of the Women's Medical College was threatened because of the Government decision to abolish the lower grade of training, was chosen as the base for the inauguration of the venture. The aim was twofold; to save the Women's Medical College by making it possible for it to rise to the higher grade; and to lay the foundation of that greater structure, the High Grade Christian Medical College which had captured the imagination of the doctors who met in Poona towards the end of 1929. Thus medical dreams come true. Support is rallying from many quarters, and we may confidently conclude that within the next decade India will be able to count on a steady supply of Indian Christian doctors and nurses, equipped with the finest qualifications, medical and spiritual, that Christian Medicine can give. What better gift could the Churches in the West offer to India at this momentous tide in her history!

It was my privilege to see the medical missionary in action on many and widely differing fronts, and it may interest some readers if I turn over the pages of memory and recall some incidents and impressions pertaining to that happy association. In doing so the words of St. Columba come to mind, "The generous man is sure of heaven, for his life is his Gospel." The medical missionary is a generous giver.

#### A ROADSIDE DISPENSARY

"It is time now to join Dr. Ida," said Mr. De Valois, of the American Arcol Mission, one of the blithest rural spirits of my acquaintance. The Dr. Ida of whom he spoke was Dr. Ida Scudder, of the same Mission, a distinguished member of a distinguished missionary family. We had been out in the villages together, and wherever we had gone poverty, debt and disease had accompanied us. Hearing at every turn the "still sad music of humanity", the mood within me turned to depression and I could not see how things as they are could become things as they ought to be; but the cloud began to lift

as we made for the trysting-place, where one day in seven Dr. Ida Scudder comes out from Vellore to visit her sick village friends and minister to their needs. Expectation ran high; but the actual scene came upon me with all the thrill of a glad surprise. A long, level spell, and Henry Ford in good form, a dip in the road, up and over the bridge, and this is what we saw: a crowd by the wayside, a big ambulance-car drawn up under the shade of a friendly tree, a lady in white—evidently a doctor—with a group of eager assistants, children everywhere, and still coming; and near the car, as they must have waited at the Pool of Bethesda and followed the track of the Great Physician long ago, a strange assortment of disabled humanity, waiting for the touch that would make them whole. Leprosy, malaria, spleen, worms, ulcers, sore eyes, and the ubiquitous itch—most democratic of diseases—were all here and clamouring for treatment. How kindly and deftly that treatment was given! The time was short—this was but one halting-place out of many and another equally needy crowd was waiting a few miles farther down the road—but every minute was turned to good purpose and no case was left unattended. I could not but mark the friendly relations between the doctor and her patients, and I felt sure that the Son of Man must have left some such shining track as He wended His healing way among the villages of Galilee. Here was disease at its ugliest, here was healing at its holiest. The beautiful country-side, stirred by a friendly breeze and lighted by a glorious sun, joined hands with consecrated human skill to repair lives broken by sin and disease: Nature and the Church shared in a task at once human and divine. We had lighted on more than a roadside clinic: we had stumbled on a sacrament.

They tell us, and the fact pierces our self-complacency like a two-edged sword, that not more than three women in a hundred in rural India receive the medical treatment they need, and we who have lived long among the villages know each of them carries its secret of unrelieved suffering. It is difficult for village folk, and particularly womenfolk, to leave their homes, where so many duties claim their presence, and come to a central city hospital. It is all the more imperative, there-

fore, that the rural reconstruction scheme that seeks to meet all the needs of the rural people should provide a place for the ministry of healing. If the sick cannot come to the doctor, the doctor must go to the sick, and the roadside dispensary suggests a hopeful way whereby this can be done. We do not minimize the need in the town; but we do emphasize the need in the country, where the patients are many and the doctors few. Here, by the roadside, the villagers come readily; they know the place and the hour, and when the doctor comes she finds them waiting. Where we met Dr. Scudder to-day was but one stage on her weekly round. Her day began at the early hour of 7 a.m. and closed at 7 p.m., and during that time she and her Indian colleagues would treat three hundred patients or more. A long and arduous day, a day that takes toll of spiritual and physical resources; but at the close of a day like this sleep falls softer in the mission bungalow, and in many a village home men and women think kindlier thoughts of God. This scene by the roadside will not readily fade. It held a "presence that disturbed me with the joy of elevated thoughts", and I shall always be glad we passed that way. Here was the Gospel in action, a miracle and also a parable. For the interpretation of it we must turn to St. Matthew:

"Then shall the King say . . .

I was sick and ye visited me : I was in prison and ye came unto me . . .

Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

#### BAMDAR AND THE HILLS OF HOME

"If you are going to Simultala then you must be going to Bamdhar." It seemed so obvious to my fellow passenger. Journeying by the Calcutta Mail from Bombay, we had early established friendly relations, as is the way in that friendliest of all social climates—an Indian railway carriage—and having adjusted our respective callings and approximate earnings, we were exploring destinations. I mentioned Simultala Station

on the East India Railway as my immediate objective, and he at once chimed in—"Bamdah". He knew the mission and hospital well. The late Dr. J. M. Macphail, then of the United Free Church of Scotland Mission, had been his father's friend, and he himself claimed acquaintance with the younger Macphail, of whose work he spoke with undisguised admiration. Founded in 1890 as a medical mission station, with Dr. Macphail as the first resident missionary, Bamdah is one of the far outposts of the Church of Scotland dedicated to the Ministry of Healing. We have a story we love to tell of Dr. J. M. Macphail. It is to the effect that on one occasion a letter, whose envelope bore the quaint device, "To the doctor who opens eyes, near Calcutta", found its way by a sure post office instinct to Dr. J. M. Macphail, United Free Church Mission Hospital, Bamdah, Santal Parganas. Bamdah lies well within the kingdom of the Santals, a proud but primitive people of ancient lineage who love the life of the forest, and is as fine a site for rurally minded medical mission work as I have seen in many travels. The ideal of a whole Gospel for a whole man is well exemplified here, and I was happy to find church and school and hospital working hand in hand for the well-being of the people, both for the life which now is and the life which is to come. Fitly enough the church tower is the outstanding landmark.

There is nothing impressive about the hospital building scheme at Bamdah, except its austere simplicity. Angels and Harley Street specialists lingering here, and missing the familiar amenities that usually accompany the healing art in our modern day—the number of beds is contingent on the number of trees in the garden—are hardly likely to mistake Bamdah for a medical Eden; but if they linger long enough they may find themselves back in the world familiar to the Great Physician when at eventide the sick and ailing of the country-side came and were healed. The buildings at Bamdah may conform to no model housing plan, nursing facilities may be vaguely hinted at, and seeming indifference to modern surgical hygienic precautions may alarm the medically orthodox; but the patients come from far and near and contrive to

go home healed and comforted. The eye operations in a single year run into five thousand, and of these two thousand are for cataract. Nature is the loyal ally of Bamdah Hospital. The wind blows healthily across the braes, the trees co-operate in neighbourly fashion and the air is kindly. The patients are not unduly overawed by super-cleanliness, nor subdued by stern measures of discipline designed to serve, in ways unknown to them, their highest good. Bamdah is a near remove from their home conditions. One can imagine a Santal Harry Lauder coming into the Bamdah Hospital and breaking into the cheerful refrain, "It is just like being at home." This may account for the large number of friends who accompany the patients. They come in battalions. "Why have you come so far?" we asked a cheerful group of pilgrims from Benares, and the answer we received made us lift our hats again to the medical missionary. They said, "We come because the doctors here know how to heal ailing eyes, and they never get angry." Happy is the Christian craftsman in whom skill and patience inhere. These belong to the spirit rather than the technique of healing, and, incidentally, these are among the things the advocates of a Christian Medical College so earnestly seek.

There is a happy missionary succession at Bamdah. It is a far cry from the island of Mull to the jungles of the Santal country; but the Clan Macphail has made and maintained it. Where his distinguished father worked for forty years, Dr. Ronald Macphail pursues with the same skill and the same devotion the same high calling, and he reaps the same reward in a ministry that heals and satisfies. The late Dr. Macphail is buried at Bamdah, and I went to see his grave. It is in the place where the Santal Christians find their last resting-place, and it seemed to me fitting that he who lived among them, laboured among them and died among them should share the fellowship of their dead. Graven in Santali on the stone that marks the grave are the great words of the Saviour—"Because I live you shall live also." The sun was setting over the hills as we lingered by the grave, and I remembered how Dr. Macphail—poet as well as physician—had resolved

these same hills into the "hills of home". He gave them new names. To him they were Ben Ledi, Ben Venue and other giants of the Grampians, while the humbler slopes took on the familiar guise of Cathkin Braes and the homely hills that lie round Glasgow. With ready wit he had renamed a certain summit "Barrhead", because a lady called Barr had once on a day overbalanced herself there. But what a lovely fancy! In a land where the doctrine of illusion holds, and men are taught to look beyond the seeming to the real, missionaries do well to cherish the gift of imagination and cultivate the poetic fancy as Dr. Macphail did. He identified himself without reserve with the Santals and the life they lived. To him affection made God's world one and the same: the hills of Scotland and the hills of Bamdah were one. They were the "hills of home". Where faith and love abide Olivet and Galilee can never be far away.

#### MIRAJ IN MOURNING

There was but one heart in the little town of Miraj, the capital of the little state of that name, on Sunday, March 22nd, and it was a sad heart, for the friend that could least be spared was dead. Late on Saturday evening, as he waited by the last ford, the call came to Charles Vail, a greatly beloved medical missionary, and, watched by friendly stars, he made his crossing. The news travelled fast and far. It came to us as we were settling down for the night in a village camp, some eight miles distant, preparatory for a busy Sunday. We returned early to find a town in tears. This was not surprising, for nearly every family there had known the cheer of his presence and the touch of his healing fingers; but we were grateful for the reminder that when the deeper emotions are stirred, the human heart can still rise to lofty levels. The uprising of human feeling was as beautiful as it was spontaneous. The name of the beloved surgeon was upon every lip. "I was sick and he visited me," many said simply, and some with memories still more poignant bore this witness, "I owe my very life to him." Men, women and children looked into each

other's eyes and read there the sorrow they themselves were sharing. They spoke of his skill, gentleness and cheerfulness—he was Sir Galahad to them—his journeyings oft in the night, his long watchings till the dawn, his courtesy to the poor, his unself-regarding service—like his Master he looked not upon his own things, but upon the things of others—and as they spoke of these things their own lives took upon them the dignity that a great sorrow gives and the beauty that unaffected gratitude alone supplies. To some extent a stranger in their midst, and our presence more or less accidental, we blessed God for what we saw and heard and felt during this day when memory gave birth to tears, and tears to thanksgiving.

How greatly the people of Miraj loved Dr. Vail! Within the short space of one hour no less than twelve hundred mourners passed reverently by his coffin to look for the last time on the dear face and skilful hands they knew so well. He had lived and served among them these twenty-seven long, eventful years, and now that he was gone Miraj could never be the same again. At three-thirty we met for a short Memorial Service in English, led by his closest friend, John Goheen, who spoke with characteristic sincerity and simplicity from the singularly appropriate text, "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." Such indeed was Dr. Vail. Freely he had received and he gave freely, generously and cheerfully. A master surgeon who, had he so cared, might have passed easily to the highest honours his country could give, he dedicated his gifts and devotions to the service of the poor and needy in one of the lesser Indian States, among a people whose language he never mastered, but in healing whose diseases he found the ends of life nobly answered. The joy of the Lord was his strength. Doing as many as thirty operations each day, he maintained a gaiety of spirit that never flagged, and in this regard he succoured the faith of many. The hymns included two that were dear to Dr. Vail—"At even ere the sun was set", and "Abide with me".

From the college chapel we made our way to the Marathi church where a congregation that overflowed into the court-

yard had assembled to do honour to one who loved the House of God and prized the fellowship of his Christian brethren. Marathi is still to us an unknown tongue; but the great Scripture passages needed no interpreting, and we could not mistake the affection of the tribute paid by the oldest member of the hospital staff, the original compounder who had served from the beginning with Dr. Wanless and had recently retired from active service. What a gathering it was! Christians of all ranks and many races, Hindus, Moslems, Parsees and some who owned no religious allegiance: all shared a common sorrow and mourned a common friend. The service over, we moved to the cemetery fully a mile away. It was a pilgrimage on foot, in which a great company joined, and the way lay along a dusty road, but no one thought of the dust and the heat; our thoughts were in the flower-crowned coffin, borne on the willing shoulders of students from the Medical School and members of the staff, proud to render this last service for one who had brought distinction to their order. We passed through reverent crowds, every verandah, doorway and window filled with mourners, on to the wind-swept plain where God's acre is, and there we laid him down. The hunter was home at last from the hill. As we neared the cemetery gates a friend said, "I have never seen a Christian witness so impressive as this." At least three thousand mourners were present within and without the graveyard, and the scene was one of unforgettable pathos and majesty. The sun had already set and night was fast coming on as a veteran of the Christian cause in Western India, Dr. A. L. Wiley, read out the great words from the Book of God, "I am the Resurrection and the Life", words that sent a new thrill of hope through our hearts. What a triumph this funeral was! So we left him there, in the keeping of the Great Lover of cheerful givers, and as we struck the old trail again we resolved to capture something of the generous spirit of Charles Vail.

#### IN THE KANGRA VALLEY

A six-hour railway run from Lahore, the capital of the Pun-



jab, by way of Amritsar and Pathankot, and thereafter by a splendid road that "climbed upward all the way", I came to Palampur in the heart of the Kangra Valley, on which the mighty Himalayas look kindly and grandly down. Here are the headquarters of the Church of England in Canada Mission, where a many-sided Christian ministry is carried on with unwearying devotion. One of the ladies of the Mission, familiar with the beauties of Toronto, Lake Ontario and the Niagara Gorge, solemnly assured me that "Kangra is the most beautiful spot in the world". I could not but share her enthusiasm, although I made a secret mental reservation in favour of a certain valley in Perthshire overlooked by humbler hills.

Palampur is a small town of some ten thousand inhabitants, but being the headquarters of the district it carries itself with an air of importance. The bazaar looked prosperous. The district was once the happy habitation of European tea planters; but the industry had fallen on evil days, and after the devastating earthquake of 1905 the planters betook themselves to pastures new. The jungle now invades the tea gardens. In a lovely church on the hill there is a table of remembrance to tell that the pulpit was given by . . . "the last of the planters". This same church is a thing of beauty, and seeing it, as I did, filled with a worshipping company, it became a joy for ever. I never see a church on a hill without emotion, and I am always glad to find a "high place" crowned, as here, by a Christian shrine. But there was more than the pine-clad hill to give beauty and meaning to the church of Palampur. The snows looked down upon it, and around it lay a churchyard, the like of which I had not hoped to see beyond the Scottish border, wherein many of those who had witnessed for Christ in other days now rest from their labours. There was gladness in remembrance. In all their manifold activities—and missionaries believe in establishing as many links of service and friendship with the people as possible—Christian worship is the main-spring. The hospital and the high school, the leper colony and the industrial school all draw their inspiration from the church on the hill.

It was in Palampur that I saw the cleanest and happiest leper colony I had yet lighted on in my many travels. It occupies a spacious hill-side, clad with pine trees, among which the winds of God blow with healing and hope. I heard with surprise that leprosy was invading these lovely scenes; and I rejoiced all the more in this splendid Christian attempt to arrest its march. The colony is under the personal supervision of the Rev. C. H. R. Wilkinson, the present head of the Canadian Mission, and I marked the personal interest he took in his charge. All the patients were his friends. The expense is borne by the Mission to Lepers—many in these days rise up and call this Mission blessed—and the local Government. The eighty-odd patients live in well-made huts, each with its little garden; and the things that make for sweetness and light are their daily companions—the chapel with its bright services, the hospital, and its gracious ministry, the school with its call to new worlds, and always the glory of the hills and the beauty of the valley. I thought if the mind anywhere could rise above the haunting fears of a fell disease it would be here. And so it was. I saw a group of lepers cheerfully engaged in physical drill; I saw many proud of their achievements in gardening, and I marvelled at some of the things the maimed hands of others had fashioned. Most of all my heart was stirred as I joined in the chapel worship and shared the invincible hope of the Christian lepers. Cleanliness and hope have a new and holier connotation for me now that I have seen the Palampur Leper Home.

In my early missionary days a leper asylum, as it was then called, was a veritable valley of the shadow of death in which the sufferers waited the final release. Then, a sense of depression crept over the spirit of the visitor; but now the scene has changed and depression gives place to hope and cheerfulness. Scientific research, medical skill, careful planning and devoted personal service have demonstrated that leprosy can be definitely arrested, if not definitely cured, and turned the asylum into a house of hope and of healing. What is happening on the pine-clad slopes of the Kangra Valley is an illustration of what is being done in other parts of India to arrest and stamp out this

most forbidding of human diseases, and to heal the deeper wounds of the spirit. All honour to the Mission to Lepers, the British Empire Relief Association and the splendid army of brave and unself-regarding men and women who are giving themselves to this essentially Christian crusade.

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INDIA AND OURSELVES

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To the friendly observer nothing is more disquieting in the Indian scene than the growing distrust of Britain's plighted word. In conversation with two Indian friends recently one of them said to me, "Do you really believe that the Cripps' proposals were a genuine expression of British intentions towards India?" and seemed surprised when I replied, "Most certainly." The other then asked if I honestly believed that Great Britain really meant to implement the promise of full self-government after the war made by Sir Stafford Cripps, and again I replied, for such is my faith, "Most certainly." This partly reassured my friend; but he added, "I think there is a snag somewhere." A snag somewhere: that, alas, is too often the reaction in Indian minds when eloquent and didactic speeches in the best democratic manner are made regarding India by British statesmen and politicians and re-echoed by the acquiescent aristocracy of the Press. How this distrust has come about is a question that defies explanation. It came in with the present century and its causes are largely psychological. They include disappointed hopes, misunderstandings, misinterpretations and resentments begotten of superior Western attitudes. The trouble with India and ourselves is that we do not understand each other. For the most part, we live in different worlds and think in different vernaculars. How necessary then that we should both cultivate the grace of charity.

We have tried to show that the nationalist movement in India is the natural expression of the awakened instinct of an ancient and proud people, fostered by the general trend of British policy and administration. But the Indian nationalist is in a hurry; he has discovered his birthright and is eager to claim it; to his impatient spirit independence is long in coming

and he concludes that the British Government is the brake on the chariot wheel of progress. He goes further and persuades himself that this same Government is reluctant to part with power and therefore deliberately holds up the caravan. When it protests that the Cripps' proposals still stand inviolate he registers an honest doubt, being persuaded that there is a snag somewhere.

This distrust of British intentions has two anchorages. In the first place, it is argued that since so much British capital is invested in India the paramount power, as an interested party, is naturally reluctant to hand over the reins of government to equally interested Indian hands. In ways they find it difficult to explain, but easy to believe, many Indian politicians have persuaded themselves that there is a hidden financial hand that guides British policy, and they incline to the view that British banking interests are partners in a grand conspiracy to keep India in a state of financial and political subjection. Thus, they argue, for purely self-interested motives Great Britain will hold on to India until compelled by overmastering considerations to let her go. The second ground of suspicion, now amounting to an obsession, is the widespread assumption that Great Britain does not trust the ability of the Indian people to manage their own affairs. When questioned on this score they will quote Mr. Lloyd George's famous speech of 1922, when he described the Indian Civil Service as the steel frame of the whole fabric and declared, "Whatever may be the success of Indians as parliamentarians or administrators, I can see no period when they can dispense with the guidance and assistance of a small nucleus of British Civil Servants." They will admit, of course, that it does not matter very much now what Mr. Lloyd George said in 1922; but they will quickly remind you that Sir Stafford Cripps said very much the same thing when he informed Congress leaders that the time was not ripe to hand over the key Ministry of Defence to an Indian member. When we protest our eagerness to see India free and independent we are met with a shrug of sceptical shoulders and the imputation that there must be a snag somewhere. We add fuel to the fire of political distrust when we dilaute on India's

internal divisions, her communal cleavages, her personal and political rivalries, and her social distinctions, and insist that these are the things that hold up the advent of self-government. Has India a monopoly of these things? the politician indignantly asks. Have not Indians a right to quarrel among themselves if they are so inclined? Is the British Government alone to enjoy the prerogative of "muddling through"? The pity of it is that a root of bitterness is springing up in this climate of suspicion and distrust and making the path of the peacemaker all the harder.

Can this mist of distrust be lifted and this root of bitterness be cast out? I believe they can and must. But the way is not easy, for what is needed is an all-round change of heart both here and in India. I am of those who firmly believe that a magnanimous British gesture, such as the British Government made to South Africa when Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was Prime Minister, would go far to let the blessed sunshine in and wither the roots of bitterness. There are certain things we cannot do: we cannot resolve India's religious or communal differences, nor can we reconcile conflicting party interests; but we can, by a generous and spontaneous initiative, do much to create that friendly climate in which national unity, or, at any rate, national understanding, can come to fruition. In other words, instead of hesitatingly wishing Mr. Rajagopalachari success in his arduous endeavours to forge a working agreement between the principal parties, the British Government can surely make his task easier and more hopeful by opening the gates of consultation to the interned Congress leaders. Their detention has lasted a long time now, and the immediate danger that largely led to their arrest may be said to have passed; but the thing to remember is that their internment without means of access to each other touches Indian self-respect and makes recourse to the paths of co-operation all the more difficult. In this connection Parliament, which is the supreme arbiter of India's destiny, cannot devolve its responsibility to servants of the Crown, however gifted and devoted these servants may be. If the Congress leaders agree to rescind the fateful Resolution of August 1942, what guarantee have

they that the substance of what they have fought for will be granted? Surely Parliament could ordain that without insisting on conditions that self-respecting Indian patriots cannot conscientiously accept, the representative leaders' conference, for which most good citizens have prayed, should be summoned forthwith and given a free hand to take up the negotiations where Sir Stafford Cripps was unfortunately compelled to leave them. Such a gesture would do more than anything else, short of a miracle, to dispel the miasma of suspicion and distrust, and sweeten these modern waters of Marah. Even if it failed it would still have been worth doing. This is a case where delay is as unwise as it is dangerous. In that interesting and discerning book, *An Indian Commentary*, by G. T. Garratt, this passage occurs: "England's shortcomings in India have seldom been due to any precipitancy in introducing changes, in fact the history of the past fifty years has been a succession of opportunities lost by delay." Too often it has seemed to students of our British ways that our reforms have come on leaden wings, and only when they could be held back no longer. India looks to Great Britain now for a magnanimous and satisfying gesture. It has always been a matter of regret that neither the Prime Minister, so splendidly engaged in prosecuting the war, nor the Secretary of State for India, so dutifully chained to the oar at the home base, has found time to visit India. Such a visit would be opportune even now.

There are those—and their number seems to be increasing—who argue that since Indian party leaders have spurned the British offer and chosen to quarrel among themselves, the dignified British course would be to quit India and leave them to it. That argument has logic to commend it; but it breathes the spirit of defeatism. It acknowledges that Great Britain has failed in the great objective of making the people of India govern themselves. Surely it is no accident that the fortunes of India and Great Britain are so closely joined, but rather a providential ordering of events. When the Indian National Congress was founded in 1885, one of the promoters, Mr. Subramania Aiyar, who in after years became a bitter opponent of British rule, gave expression to what was then the prevailing

sentiment in these words: "By a merciful dispensation of Providence, India, which was for centuries the victim of external aggression and plunder, of internal civil wars and general confusion, has been brought under the dominion of the British Power." If India to-day is not so sure about this providential arrangement an added obligation rests upon us to give full proof of it. The omens now indicate that this special dispensation is running out, and it becomes all who wish India and Britain well to pray and strive that the transition from tutelage to full nationhood may be carried through with mutual goodwill and mutual confidence. This is not a time for recrimination, nor is it a time for idle regrets: it is a time for faith and not fear, for trust and not misgiving: it is a time for the big and generous thing. There is undoubtedly an element of grave risk in setting up a provisional national government when the fortunes of the World War are still in a critical stage; but the risk is India's as much as ours. At present the national current is setting in strongly towards separation, a complete break with the old dispensation, a seeking for national salvation without the pale of the British Empire; but there are men of good sense and wide experience in all the Indian parties who see clearly that their country cannot live in isolation and play the part in world affairs the inexorable march of events will lay upon her. They know full well that some future upheaval may expose her coasts to hostile invasion; and they see the inestimable advantage of membership in a great and powerful confederacy like the British Commonwealth of Nations. Apart from that material consideration, and underlying the present political turmoil, there is a residue of genuine affection for the British people and a desire to retain their friendship. In her colossal plans for post-war reconstruction India will assuredly welcome the co-operation of British brains, British capital and the hospitality of British markets. Were it not for these considerations it might well be argued that India's future lies in a new federation of nations with China and Russia as her partners. But accepting the view that Britain is in India by a dispensation of Providence, and believing that in the main that presence has worked out for the national good of India, we



cannot resist the conviction that this dispensation will find its true consummation when India becomes an equal partner in the British Commonwealth of Nations. An India free, independent and friendly, a willing and welcome partner in that great commonwealth, will in the long run prove to be Great Britain's finest achievement in her long eventful history. But let us not miss the tide.

The immediate need is for understanding and friendship, for respect—who can measure the wealth of India's manpower?—rather than pity. We must cease to think of Indians as children and begin to think of them as human beings like ourselves. Once when reading Burns's poem "A man's a man for a' that" with a Muhammadan student, we came on the great line "the rank is but the guinea stamp, the man's the gowd for a' that", and he asked me to explain it. As I did so the noble truth of man's essential nobility dawned upon him, and his face lighted up with a new sense of manhood. Then he said quietly, "That is what our people need to know." We must ever be on our guard against the spirit of patronizing, and mindful of the importance of good manners! Coming from India one is disappointed at the meagre space given by the British Press to Indian affairs. When it is remembered that these affairs affect the well-being of three hundred and ninety million of our fellow subjects of the British Crown, the exigencies of a world war can hardly excuse what seems to be an unpardonable neglect of their interests. For lack of knowledge people in these islands, who are well disposed towards India, too readily conclude that all is well since the British Government, which to their mind is the most perfect government in this imperfect world, has the ordering of events, and that, therefore, all the trouble in India must be due to the Indians themselves. From that assumption to the passing of hasty judgments on Mr. Gandhi, Mr. Jinnah and other Indian leaders is an easy transition. Little do these critics know how bitterly their judgments and their preachings are resented in India. It is high time Charity, still the greatest of the Christian graces, came back to its kingdom. Germane to all this is the spirit of complacency, so evident in our general British attitude to life,

that includes India in its baneful sweep and clogs the wheels of progress. Oddly enough, I have found keener interest in Indian problems, and a more eager desire to do something to solve them, among men and women of the Services than even in ecclesiastical circles. This is in keeping with what British soldiers and airmen are experiencing in India. They are seeing for themselves the poverty and illiteracy that abound in the land and many of them have been called to render noble service in the famine-stricken areas. They have found in the Indian soldier a comrade in arms, and when they come home they will not forget. To them the Church's call to service will not come in vain.

#### THE CHURCH'S DUTY TO INDIA

The Church is not unmindful of her duty to India, but she is greatly preoccupied with problems that lie nearer hand than Calcutta and Delhi, and since her leaders have not the time to apprehend for themselves the inwardness of the changing Indian scene they do not respond with alacrity to the calls from their brethren in India to rise up and do something. The fact, however, that the British Council of Churches, through an influential deputation to the Secretary of State for India, entered a plea for the re-opening of negotiations with responsible Indian leaders, including those still interned, showed that Christian sentiment in Britain is aroused to the necessity of doing something to end the present unhappy deadlock. To use a familiar Indian phrase, this action of the Council was "like rain on the rice-fields" to their wistful Christian brethren in India. Had it been earlier it would have been still more appreciated; but it has to be remembered that without accurate knowledge of all the facts it is not easy for Christian leaders to take public action regarding issues that are political as well as moral. The pity of it is that a more resolute effort is not made to acquire this necessary knowledge. In this connection, it is a matter of thankfulness that literature of excellent quality affecting every aspect of Indian life and thought is available to the average reader. Outstanding are

the three volumes on *The Indian Problem*, written by Professor R. Coupland, Beit Professor of Colonial History in the University of Oxford, and published by the Oxford University Press. To master these volumes is simple imperial duty. Mention must also be made of the fine service being rendered by the India Conciliation Group in London, whose special mission it is, without doing despite to the official point of view, to present the Indian case fully and fairly to the British public. India owes them a debt she will never forget.

A happy sign of the somewhat gloomy times is the discovery by the clergy generally of the "world community", with its attendant sense of responsibility. Like their famous progenitor, John Knox, they are thinking in terms of "Christ's Kirk ecumenical". That Kirk, by the grace of God, is domiciled in India and called in these dark days of war and racial bitterness to discharge the "ministry of reconciliation". To enable it to fulfil this lofty mission it is inviting the co-operation of the Churches in Great Britain, and the burden of its prayer is that reconciliation should begin at home. Distrust and bitterness have their cells in these islands, as in India, and to dispel them is plain Christian duty. Much would have been gained if deputations of responsible Indian leaders could have come over to this country for the purpose of educating and interesting the general public on Indian questions. I hope as the war clouds lift and the difficulties of transport lessen that it may be possible for such deputations to come and help us to form right judgments on things Indian. It is specially important that Christian leaders pay us occasional visits, for apart from the political problems on which we need light, there are questions affecting the whole range and future of the Christian enterprise in India, as also the implications of the ecumenical fellowship, that can only be satisfactorily settled in frank and friendly consultation. We have learned that such Christian embassies bring spiritual gifts with them, and of such gifts our Churches stand greatly in need. Let then the gravity of the Indian scene be a direct call to the Church Ecumenical to utilize its lines of communication to the full and demonstrate to a sceptical world the reality of its common faith. Let there

be more coming and going between the Churches in Britain and the Churches in India.

We bring these chapters to a close by renewing our plea for understanding, kindly judgment, chivalrous trust and courageous action. Speaking in New York on April 7, 1942, Viscount Halifax, whom India affectionately remembers as Lord Irwin, quoted these words from the great Indian Emperor Asoka, who flourished in India three centuries before Christ : "For what do I toil? For no other end than this, that I may discharge my debt to living beings." He then went on to say, "We too have toiled in India, for past and future generations. The issue of our toil lies in other than human hands. But if, when the time comes that we can lay upon India's shoulders the full burden of responsibility now resting on us, a like verdict might be recorded, I do not think that the British race could desire any higher commendation."

These shoulders of India are now ready and willing to accept the burden : let us trust them.

## A SHORT BIBLIOGRAPHY

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PART II. 1936-1941. 7s. 6d.

PART III. 1943. *The Future of India*. 6s. 6d.

This authoritative and objective study provides an excellent foundation for an understanding of the Indian problem and, at the same time, suggests how a solution may be found.

OXFORD PAMPHLETS ON INDIAN AFFAIRS. Nos. 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 14.

Oxford University Press, 9d. and 1s. 6d. An invaluable series.

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Describes the real India in quaint terms.

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